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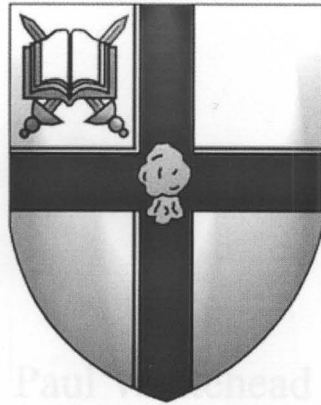
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The Application of the 'COPED' Theoretical
Framework Model: A Case Study



CHESTER
BUSINESS SCHOOL

A Dissertation submitted for the degree of
Master of Business Administration

Department of
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June 2006

The Application of the 'COPED' Theoretical Framework Model: A Case Study

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A Dissertation submitted for the degree of
Master of Business Administration

Chester Business School
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Abstract

This dissertation has reviewed the past and present literature relating to business collaboration and partnerships, with particular reference to public-private sector joint ventures, to gain an insight into the barriers to success and an understanding of what methods have been recommended to overcome them.

The evidence suggested that joint ventures partnerships, whilst increasing in popularity, are complex organisations that face many obstacles and are difficult to manage. However, little empirical research has been conducted into the application of a framework of best practice that might contribute towards the success of such partnership arrangements, despite the general consensus that a high proportion of them will encounter difficulties and ultimately fail. The work of Trafford and Proctor (2006) examined the important characteristics that go hand-in-hand with successful public-private joint venture partnerships and presented a theoretical model (COPED), which identified five key characteristics, which they argued, may be considered influential to their success. This led to the research question; *Can a theoretical model of joint venture best practice be successfully applied in a case study situation?*

This research applied the principals of the 'COPED' model, to the case study of a recently formed public-private joint venture partnership (BusinessLiverpool), in an attempt to test its effectiveness at identifying emerging problems and thus enable timely and effective remedial action to be taken.

The research strategy adopted a multi-method approach, through the use of survey and case study techniques and using a combination of semi-structured interviews to collect the qualitative data and a questionnaire to collect the quantitative data.

Results obtained from the data analysis indicated a range off issues and opportunities evident within the case study organisation and also provided additional characteristics to

that of the COPED model that may also be considered as important to the success of such partnerships.

The theoretical model was therefore successfully applied, in that, the framework enabled a comprehensive analysis of staff perceptions and attitudes towards the characteristics viewed as important to the success of a joint venture partnership. As a result, a number of recommendations have been made to remedy the current situation and a checklist for future successful joint venture partnerships has been proposed.

Declaration

This work is original and has not been submitted previously for any academic purpose.
All secondary sources are acknowledged.

Signed: _

Date: _

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the Research

There has been a wide range of research and published material on the subject of collaboration between different organisations, (Buchel et al, 1998; Buchel, 2002; Harrigan, 2003; Larkin, 1994; Rosenau, 1999, Olson 1990). These collaborative efforts can take many forms, including; partnerships, alliances and joint ventures. Partnerships also have a key role to play in the governments 'Modernising Government Agenda', which recognises that today's modern citizen is faced with a bewildering number of service agencies. In order to address this issue and remove the confusion that exists, the Modernising Government Agenda proposed the following three aims:

- To ensure that policy making is more coordinated and strategic in nature.
- To make sure that public service users, not providers, are the focus of attention, by matching services more closely to people's lives.
- To deliver high quality and efficient public services.

Much of the research has focused on joint venture partnerships, describing their popularity, exploring their behavioural and structural aspects, as well as offering some suggestions as to what factors may contribute to their success. However, such partnerships are not easy to manage, involving sometimes fragile coalitions and alliances, with leaders needing to be brokers and negotiators, whilst at the same time having to inspire a vision and deliver a mission. The complexity of joint venture partnership working is seen as the most common obstacle to establishing and developing effective collaborative working and there is much evidence suggesting that such partnerships are doomed to failure. Indeed much of the literature reveals that despite the popularity of joint ventures, there appears to be a high failure rate (Bleeke & Ernst, 1991; Harrington, 2003), with some estimates that between 30% and 70% fail. Yet despite their importance and the challenges they face, there has been little discussion about how such

organisations should be managed and evaluated in order to increase their chances of success.

1.2 Research Question and its Justification

Can a theoretical model of joint venture best practice be successfully applied in a case study situation?

It is evident from the literature that many studies have focused on partnership working and have highlighted the many constraints and barriers to success that are faced by organisations entering into such business relationships. There is also evidence of many factors that, if managed effectively, can contribute to the success of such partnerships, yet the message is that there is no one formula for success and the implementation process is a difficult one, requiring the effective management a number of factors.

However there is little empirical research that has been conducted into the application of a framework of best practice to such an organisation, despite the general consensus that many of them will encounter difficulties and ultimately fail.

The work of Trafford and Proctor (2006) examined the important characteristics that go hand-in-hand with successful public-private partnerships. This work presented a descriptive model, which identified five key characteristics: good communication, openness, effective planning, ethos and direction (COPED), which they argued, may be considered influential to the success of joint ventures.

This research applies the principals of the 'COPED' model as proposed by Trafford and Proctor (2006), to the case study of BusinessLiverpool, an organisation that is currently undergoing a joint venture process. The aims of this study have been to;

- (a) Apply the principles of the Trafford and Proctor, 2006, theoretical 'COPED' model to BusinessLiverpool in order that staff attitudes towards each characteristic may be evaluated

- (b) On the basis of the evaluation, provide evidence of the models effectiveness at identifying joint venture success levels
- (c) Investigate other characteristics that may contribute towards a successful joint venture
- (d) Make recommendations as to how to manage the case study joint venture partnerships more effectively
- (e) Suggest a check-list of guidelines to facilitate the set up of future joint venture partnerships
- (f) Contribute to joint venture partnership knowledge literature

1.3 Rationale for the Joint Venture

The original concept of a single point of contact to deal with business support and inward investment enquiries within Liverpool was initially highlighted in the Liverpool First prospectus (1999) which, combined with consultation with the local business community, led to Liverpool City Council seeking a suitable resolution. As a result, Liverpool Business Centre (LBC) was launched in 2001 as a first step to creating an integrated 'one stop shop', service for business.

LBC existed as a loose 'partnership' between three organisations; Liverpool City Council (LCC), Liverpool Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) and Greater Merseyside Enterprise (GME - now Business Link for Greater Merseyside). The three main functions around the LBC concept included; Inward investment, Social economy/support for community based enterprises and people services for general enquiries and recruitment.

However, following its first few years of existence, it was recognised that the partnership behind LBC at its launch had not been extended further. Whilst liaison and joint working between partners (primarily in the form of inter-agency referrals) took place, LBC remained essentially a Liverpool City Council operation. It was also synonymous with the LCC Investment Team which reflected the core purpose of the original economic

development function. As a consequence, it was recognised that whilst significant progress had been made in the co-ordination of business support and advice within Liverpool, the lack of a formal partnership and the associated failure to fully integrate operational commitments was inhibiting its ability to become the focus for investment support in the city. In essence, a true 'One Stop Shop' approach for business had yet to be fully realised (Liverpool City Council, 2003).

As a result of the ongoing consultation between Liverpool City Council and other business support agencies in the city, it was proposed to re-launch the LBC concept with a more integrated and revised operation in order to develop an improved business support service within Liverpool.

In December of 2004 Liverpool Business Centre was re-branded and re-launched as BusinessLiverpool, a joint venture company limited by guarantee, between Business Link for Greater Merseyside, Liverpool Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Liverpool City Council. This new joint venture partnership comprised of a board from both the public and private sector, including; 6 representatives from the partner organisations, the Company's Chair and Chief Executive and 6 independent non-executive directors. This strategy was viewed as the most compelling option as it would allow the maximum exploitation of the current resources that already exist between the 'informal' partners.

Following a twelve month period of change implementation and negotiation between partners at a senior management level, the formalities of the joint venture company have remained unresolved, with much time spent on dealing with emerging issues, tensions and concerns between the partners as to the value and true intentions of the joint venture.

In order to critically assess the process and suggest some resolutions, this research proposed that the theories of joint venture good practice be examined and where possible the application of the theoretical 'COPED' model (Trafford and Proctor, 2006) be applied in a case study situation.

1.4 The Partner Organisations

Liverpool City Council

Liverpool City Council has undergone rapid, strategic change in order to deliver high quality, cost effective services that its customers actually want and, indeed, demand.

As part of this strategic change, it is essential that Liverpool improves its economic performance, as a key contributor to the Merseyside and, indeed, North West economy, with the consequent impact on the prosperity and employment opportunities for the people of Liverpool and beyond.

Liverpool City Council has set itself the target of making Liverpool the most business friendly city in the UK by 2006 and has the overarching goal to be a premier European city.

A key driver of this strategic change is the opportunity for Liverpool to proactively manage and maximize its relationships in order to secure sustainable new investment and jobs. This applies not just to existing Liverpool businesses and businesses that are considering setting up in the city, but also to businesses that would not, for historic reasons, consider Liverpool in initial major city research.

Prior to 2001, Liverpool had not had a cohesive strategy to promote itself as an investment/business location, with many initiatives being taken on an ad-hoc basis. The establishment of Liverpool Business Centre in 2001 was to help deliver this strategic change agenda, of which there are three key elements:

1. The proactive approach to effective management of investment opportunities/business support to ensure mobile investment and indigenous re-investment opportunities are captured.
2. To ensure, as part of a strategic partnership approach, that Liverpool is effectively promoted as a business friendly investment location.

3. Liverpool reaches its target of being the most business friendly city in the UK by 2006.

Business Link for Greater Merseyside

Business Link provides the information, advice and support needed to start, maintain and grow a business. It provides information and advice to help customers make the most of their opportunities. Rather than providing all the advice and help itself, it fast-tracks customers to the expert help they need. The Business Link service is a key part of the government's campaign to promote enterprise and to make the UK the best place in the world to start and grow a business. Business Link for Greater Merseyside delivers this service locally and covers Wirral, Liverpool, Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and St. Helens. The service is quality assured regionally to clear national standards and is primarily funded by the Department of Trade and Industry, supported by a number of other government departments, agencies and local authorities.

Liverpool Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Liverpool Chamber of Commerce and Industry was established in 1850 to protect the interests of the merchants and businesses in the city and today boasts over full members and 600 affiliated members.

Their wide range of services, support and opportunities are designed to keep members of the organisation ahead of the competition. They are promoted as the voice of Liverpool's business community and offer a range of benefits that range from training to trade missions, representation to networking. Liverpool Chamber of Commerce is part of a wider network of North West Chambers as well as an accredited member of the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) and longstanding relationships with chambers around the world, including China, Europe and the Middle East.

1.5 Methodology

This study will first examine the theory behind partnership working and a literature review has been carried out to illustrate the theoretical foundation upon which the research has been based. It reviews the relevant literature surrounding the various types of partnerships that exist, including resource sharing, strategic alliances, joint ventures and public-private partnerships. The literature review also explores the area of joint ventures in more detail, highlighting the fact that despite their popularity, many are prone to failure. Reasons for failure are explored further as well as critical success factors, including two examples of successful joint ventures. However, it is evident from the literature that there is little empirical research that has been conducted into the application of a framework of best practice to such organisations, and the research proposes to apply a theoretical model of best practice in order to test the research question and achieve the research objectives.

BusinessLiverpool, an organisation currently experiencing the early stages of a joint venture formation, was used by way of a case study, in order to test the model and gauge the levels of success or otherwise of partnership.

In order to answer the research question and fulfil the research aims, a positivist research philosophy was adopted with a predominantly deductive approach. The research strategy adopted a multi-method approach, through the use of survey and case study techniques and using a combination of semi-structured interviews to collect the qualitative data and a questionnaire to collect the quantitative data.

For the qualitative data, semi structured interviews were held with key subjects from across the organisation. The outputs of these interviews were then used to inform the questionnaire design. The questionnaire was piloted to ensure it was a reliable instrument and went through a number of revisions before being sent to respondents. The sample from each organisation included the chief executive, a senior manager and a member of the operational staff and selection was based on their knowledge and involvement in managing the day to day operation of the partnership. An introductory email was sent to

all selected subjects, outlining the purpose of the research and requesting their participation and confidentiality was also emphasised. All of the semi-structured interviews were on a one to one basis and were held in private meeting rooms or the office of the interviewee.

A self-administered questionnaire was used as the primary quantitative data collection method, which was thoroughly tested for validity and reliability through a series of piloting, prior to being issued. A total of 29 questionnaires were distributed throughout the three partner organisation and participants were selected based on their involvement with the joint venture. A census method was employed, as an attempt was made to collect and analyse data from every possible case or group member. All questionnaires were distributed by hand and participants were asked to return them via internal mail to the researcher.

1.6 Outline of Chapters

Chapter One – Introduction

The broad field of study relating to business collaboration and in particular joint venture partnerships is outlined in this chapter. The central issue relating to the application of a theoretical model for joint venture success is highlighted and the aims and justification for the research discussed. As this is a case study, based on a joint venture, the chosen organisation is discussed in some detail, including the separate organisations that make up the partnership

Chapter Two – Literature Review

The fields of study relating to business collaboration and partnerships are presented in more detail, together with a review of the range and scope of such arrangements, including public-private partnerships. Joint ventures partnerships are discussed more specifically, including the advantages and disadvantages of such arrangements. The reasons for joint venture failure are highlighted, followed by a discussion as to what factors contribute towards their success. Examples of two successful joint ventures are

described in order to highlight some of the factors already discussed. This chapter emphasises that despite the popularity of joint ventures and their perceived high failure rate, there is lack of empirical research surrounding guidelines for best practice. The theoretical framework model, 'COPED', is presented, which illustrates some key characteristics associated with the success and maintenance of joint venture partnerships and the intention of the research to apply this model and extend the existing research is stated.

Chapter Three – Methodology

This chapter details the research method undertaken in order to address the research question and objectives. It explains the research philosophy, approach and overall research strategy, whilst giving justification for the chosen methods. Both qualitative and quantitative methods are employed and detail relating to research design, sample, settings, participants, materials, data collection methods and analysis are described in detail.

Chapter Four – Findings

The findings for the research question *“Can a theoretical model of joint venture best practice be successfully applied in a case study situation?”* are presented in detail. Details for both the qualitative and quantitative findings are presented.

Chapter Five – Conclusions and Implications

A critical evaluation of the adopted methodology is presented, describing how successful the chosen methodology fitted the problem. Conclusions about the research problem and the research question are also summarised and limitations of the study and opportunities for future research presented.

Chapter Six – Recommendations

This chapter outlines recommendations for future action in order to remedy the situation within the chosen case study and suggests some general guidelines in the form of a check list to aid the formation of future joint ventures partnerships.

1.6 Definitions

Public Sector Body

'Public Sector Body' is used to refer to central government departments, agencies and Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs), it also refers to most public corporations, including NHS Trusts and other NHS bodies, agencies, NDPBs and Trading Funds but not to 'self-financing public corporations' (other than to any which are Trading Funds) or to local authorities. (HM Treasury Joint Venture Guidance Note, 2001).

Joint Venture Company

A Joint Venture Company with public and private sector shareholders is a distinct form of Public Private Partnership (PPP). The new company is the vehicle by which the common enterprise of the Joint Venture is carried out and is a separate legal entity with its own name.

It is important to distinguish the formation of a Joint Venture Company from purely contractual arrangements, such as for the provision of goods and services. The public and private sector partners can hold shares in the new company. Joint Ventures require that both parties accept the idea of shared risk and shared reward. Each must be willing to make quantifiable contributions throughout the project development and implementation process. (HM Treasury Joint Venture Guidance Note, 2001).

Strategic Alliances

One of the essential features of a true strategic alliance is that it is intended to move each of the partners towards the achievement of some long term strategic goal.... This strategic objective is the one distinguishing feature that separates strategic alliances from other forms of inter-firm cooperation (Webster 1992).

Stakeholders

Stakeholders are those groups from whom an organisation has voluntarily accepted benefits, and to whom the organisation has therefore incurred obligations of fairness.

Typically this includes groups such as financiers, employees, customers, suppliers and local communities (Phillips, 2004).

1.7 Summary

In brief, this chapter has outlined the field of study introduced the focus of the research problem and stated the following research question: *Can a theoretical model of joint venture best practice be successfully applied in a case study situation?*

The need for research has been justified, definitions have been presented, the methodology has been briefly described and the structure of the report has been outlined. On these foundations, the dissertation can proceed with a detailed description of the research.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

There are a variety of arrangements that exist for collaboration between different organisations and over the past ten years, such partnership arrangements have become more and more common in all sectors (Patel, 2005). There are many reasons for this development including government pressures, changes in the business environment, a need to increase efficiency and as a way of achieving a competitive advantage. Walker and Johannes (2003) see collaboration as a way of enabling organisations to compensate for gaps in their knowledge and capacity to provide goods or services. Bagchi and Paik (2001), talking about public-private collaboration state that it enables accomplishment of economic development objectives neither government nor the private sector could achieve alone. They also claim that it allows government and private sectors to learn from each other, create synergistic effects for both parties, and provide the means to combine the efficiency and expertise from both the private sector with public interest.

2.2 Types of Partnerships

Partnerships between organisations can take many forms, depending on the kinds of partner involved and nature of the relationship, they can be formalised inter-organisational relationships yet they can also exist as loose arrangements of co-operation and informal networking between organisations, with no shareholding or ownership involved (Johnson and Scholes, 2002). According to Wilson et al, (1995), partnerships are a “range of activities”, Osborne (1996) refers to partnerships as “inter-organisational activities” and Bernhauser et al (1996) describe partnerships as “a relationship between an organisation or a group...and some other party or parties”. In a public service context, Kernaghan (1993) describes a partnership as “a relationship involving the sharing of power, work, support and/or information with others for the achievement of joint goals and/or mutual benefits”. There are a range of terms used to describe partnerships and Kearns (2000) identifies three types:

Resource sharing: This type of partnership occurs when two or more organisations share resources and achieve a mutual aim.

Joint Ventures: This involves a more formal agreement to carry out a definite project. This type of partnership is more complex than resource sharing and usually involves the creation of a separate company.

Strategic alliances: This type of partnership occurs when two or more organisations come together to achieve a variety of strategic objectives and requires a high degree of commitment from all parties due to its complexity.

2.3 Public-Private Partnerships

According to Broadbent and Laughlin (2003), public-private partnerships are a recent extension of what has now become well known as the 'new public management' agenda for changes in the way public services are provided. Johnson and Scholes (2001) agree with this sentiment by stating that collaboration and partnerships between public and private sector organisations has come centre-stage in more recent times. Bagchi and Paik (2001) also comment on the popularity of such partnerships and state that public-private partnership allows government and private sectors to learn from each other and create synergistic effects for both parties, whilst combining the efficiency and expertise of the private sector with public interest and accountability. The reasons for contemplating a public-private partnership according to Jamali and Suliman (2004) lie in the inherent differences between the sectors, which are outlined in Figure 1. These differences imply that such partnerships can, under the right conditions, provide an effective mechanism for capitalising on the peculiarities and strengths of each sector in the pursuit of common objectives.

For the public agency, the main rewards from partnering with the private sector are; improvement of programme performance, cost-efficiencies, better service provision and appropriate allocation of risks and responsibilities (Pongsiri, 2002). On the other hand,

the private sector expects to have a good return on investment, which according to Scharle (2002), is an essential consideration from the private partner perspective. Public agencies and private organisations can seek mutual advantages in developing public-private partnerships, particularly when the latter is characterised by trust, openness, fairness and mutual respect (Jamali and Suliman, 2004). The essence appears to be the cooperation and mutually supporting nature of the relationship.

2.4 Joint Ventures

The partnership arrangement chosen for this report is a joint venture, which according to Johnson and Scholes (1990) are typically thought of as arrangements where two or more share resources and activities to pursue a strategy. Such organisations remain independent but set up newly created organisations, jointly owned. Joint venturing is faster, more flexible, less risky, and less costly than internal start-ups and acquisitions, while simultaneously increasing the partners' access to critical resources such as marketing, technology, raw materials and components, financial assets, managerial expertise and political influence (Schillaci, 1997). Joint Ventures allow firms to pool resources and complementary strengths to increase productivity and to improve competitive position in a way that they could not do alone (Harrington, 1998, Pearce, Robbins and Robinson, 1987). According to HM Treasury Guidance (2001) the key features of a joint venture company from the public sector point of view includes:

- Having its own legal capacity, separate from its founders
- Improved access to the skills and other resources of the private sector partner.
- A mechanism for capturing longer term value, as the public sector will hold an equity stake in the company
- Flexibility
- Greater staff incentives to succeed through the provision of more flexible incentives and higher salary prospects
- A skilled independent management team
- Greater focus on the business plan and achieving goals

Public Sector		Private Sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blurred agent-principal relationship • Inward/productive/professional interests orientation • Reactive style • Politically constrained 	Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear agent-principal relationships • Consumer /marketing focus orientation • Proactive style • Stakeholder interests but less constrained
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple and sometimes vague/ conflicting • Equity and probity • Closed system leading to continuity/consistency • Focus on inputs • Non-market prices/states subsidies 	Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uni-dimensional (profit) • Entrepreneurial • Open/adaptable • Focus on outputs/outcomes • Market prices/subsidy centres
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High unionization/centralised bargaining • Salary/grading • High security employment 	Labour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower unionisation/decentralised bargaining • Employment based on performance • Less security of employment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bureaucratic and formal • Internal communication via written memos • Formal committee structures • Rule book procedures • Accounting and management information systems under developed 	Communications and reporting systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-bureaucratic/informal • More direct communications (face to face) • Financial targets; outcomes • Strong accounting and management information systems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Politically and geographically constrained • Business development limited • Location; mainly national 	Nature and location of the business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercially determined • Diversification, investment and divestment/mergers/overseas ventures • Location; international/global orientation

Figure 1. Main Distinctions between the Public and Private Sectors (Adapted from Shafritz and Hyde, 1997)

It seems therefore that there are clear advantages for the joint venture approaches and there is much published material on the subject (Buchel et al, 1998; Buchel, 2002; Harrigan, K, R, 2003; Larkin, G, 1994; Rosenau, 1999, Olson 1990). However whilst there is recognition that joint ventures are growing in popularity, there is also much evidence that some measure of caution must be applied as such approaches are strewn with failed attempts.

Harrington (2003), examined over 400 joint venture organisations and found that a high proportion were 'typically unstable'. Strategic Direction (2003), commented that in theory, joint ventures 'do not sound too complicated', but raised the question 'so why do (organisations) find it hard to get it right?' The same publication in a 2005 article stated that between 1996 and 2001, American CEOs signed an acquisition or alliance every hour of every day. The deals totalled 74,000 acquisitions and 57,000 alliances in six years, with a combined value of \$12 trillion. Yet out of all those business moves, research indicates that around fifty percent of them will have failed.

2.5 Reasons for Failure

Business collaboration such as alliances and joint venture partnerships require a high levels of commitment from all parties and often take complex forms and it is inevitable therefore that a number of constraints can be identified. It is evident that despite the many positives, there are also many negatives. On the down side, for example, joint ventures lessen individual control, and can be slow in their responsiveness to environmental dynamics due to the complexity of joint venture management (Kanter, 1989; Killing, 1982). Partnerships create a new form of accountability between their members which rests primarily on trust and where there is mistrust or hostility between partners then the effectiveness of the operation may be difficult to achieve (Bennett et. al. 2004). Reported joint venture failure rates range from 36 to 70 percent (Killing, 1983: Levine and Bryne, 1986) and about half of all alliances fall well short of expectations. The reasons for these failures, according to Aslinger and Jenk (2004) are sadly predictable (Figure 2).

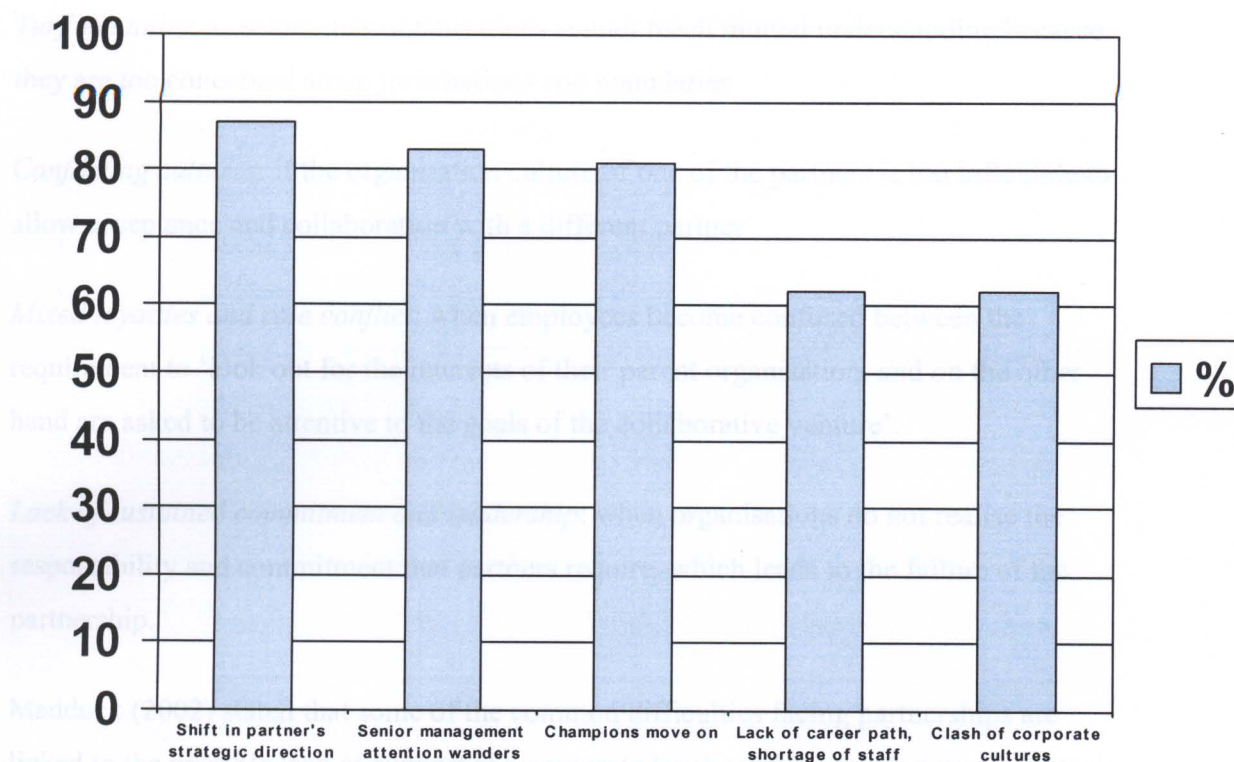


Figure 2. Causes of Alliance Failure (Anslinger and Jenk, 2004)

Huxham (1995, 1996a), highlighted the potential problems associated with collaboration and partnerships, which were:

Loss of control: The inability to take action if things seem to be going wrong or differently from expectations

Multiple goals: Stakeholders are likely to want to achieve their own particular goals which may not relate to the stated purpose of the partnership

Tension between autonomy and accountability: Members may be accountable to their stakeholder groups which may mean checking back before committing to a decision.

Kearns (2000) identified a number of barriers that both reflect and expand on those identified by Huxham (1995, 1996a). They are as follows:

Turf mentality: as sometimes organisations cannot reach mutual understanding because they are too concerned about jurisdictions and boundaries

Conflicting cultures: if the organisation culture of one of the partners is too inflexible to allow acceptance and collaboration with a different partner

Mixed loyalties and role conflict: when employees become confused between the requirement to 'look out for the interests of their parent organisation, and on the other hand are asked to be attentive to the goals of the collaborative venture'.

Lack of sustained commitment and leadership: when organisations do not realise the responsibility and commitment that partners require, which leads to the failure of the partnership.

Maddock (2002) stated that some of the common difficulties facing partnerships are linked to the possible lack of support at a corporate level combined with a weak strategic framework, as this can lead to a lack of clarity as to how the partnership will be managed. Partnership research also suggests that the failure of many partnerships can be traced to partner selection stage and planning stages and identifies the 'four Cs' of compatibility, capability, commitment and control as critical for the pre-selection of partners (Hagen, 2002).

2.6 Critical Success Factors

Although there is no magic formula for successful business collaboration and joint venture partnerships specifically, previous studies have discussed a range of factors which are influential in their success (Kelly and Kelly, 2002; Aslinger and Jenk, 2003; Patel, 2005; Jamali and Suliman, 2004; Sammii, 2002 and Kanter, 1994). Such partnerships depend on the development of mutual respect, understanding and of sharing strategic objectives and values, the establishment of trust and the ability to develop acceptable ways of joint working. First, and foremost, a successful public-private partnership according to Bagchi and Paik (2001) is often based on a very high level of cooperation

between government and private sector. The hallmark of a successful partnership is a cooperative and mutually supporting relationship between the two parties and a realization that each party has a stake in the success of the other (Lockwood *et al.*, 2000). Without this recognition and cooperation, the partnership experiences a waste of time and resources from both parties and fails to produce desired results. Another key to a successful partnership is a strong leadership (Flora *et al.*, 1992). Because a partnership involves many players from both government and the private sector working closely in tandem, it is essential to have a coordinator who can provide leadership and steer the process forward by addressing various complex issues that arise along the way. Another necessary element for a successful public-private partnership is patience from government and private sector (Larkin, 1994). Successful partnership seldom occurs spontaneously. It requires long-term investment and far sightedness from both parties. McGraw (1984) also discussed several pillars of success in the public-private partnership. They included a sense of crisis, a coherent strategy implemented by first-rate talent, performance measures and some means of controlling the agenda.

Johnson and Scholes (2001) put forward the view that successful partnerships need to develop and adopt different management styles in order to overcome the issues that arise around cultural differences, collaborative working and knowledge sharing, as well as devise new structures which allow for flexibility and encourage open communication between stakeholders. These views are shared by Nijkamp *et al* (2002), Scharle (2002) and Spackman (2002), who as well as identifying cultural differences and cooperation; suggest that a key characteristic for successful partnership working is a trusting relationship between parties based on a shared vision.

Public-private collaboration has various challenges that must be overcome. Important challenges to public-private partnership involve conflicts of interest between government and private sectors, cost shifting from one partner to another, and managing risk and uncertainty (Rosenau, 1999). When the interests of the public and private partners are aligned and they share common objectives, the process goes smoothly. Managing risk and uncertainty is also crucial to the success of any public-private partnerships. Cost

shifting of the less profitable part to the public sector partner is one effective way to reduce risk (Rosenau, 1999). It can increase the attractiveness of the project from the private partner's point of view and demonstrate the government's support and participation.

In general, partnering success is likely in certain contexts. The partnership performs well if there is broad community or societal consensus in the value of the policy goals. Public-private partnerships are also likely to be successful if key decisions are made at the very beginning of the project and set out in a concrete plan, achievable goals are set down, incentives for partners are established, and progress is monitored (Nagel, 1997). This can be achieved at the highest level of business and government. Johnson and Scholes (2002), reiterate that to be successful, strategic alliances such as joint ventures require trust between partners in both the 'competence and the integrity of each party'. They go on to suggest that aligned to trust must be; senior management support, an ability to define and meet performance expectations, clear goals, compatibility at an operational level and a willingness to let the partnership evolve and change.

Huxham and Vangen (1996) have shown that action, by the more powerful participant in a relationship is at the core of successful partnerships. It has also been highlighted by the same authors that in the future, and in order to avoid the inevitable issues of partner working, public sector management will need to be able to possess the skills, processes, structures, technologies and tools required for working across organisational boundaries (Huxham and Vangen, 2000). When examining the success and failure mechanisms of public private partnerships, Jamali and Suliman (2004) identified a range of typical key formation requirements, which are illustrated in Table 1.

Based On	Requirement	Description
Sammii et al (2002)	Resource Dependency	Recognition by the partners that what can be achieved together cannot be achieved alone
	Commitment Symmetry	Equal commitment from partners confirmed through the allocation of time and resources
	Common goal Symmetry	Individual goals as an output or a subset of the overall objectives
	Intensive Communication	Regular communication through different channels/means
	Alignment of cooperation	The sharing of knowledge across organisational boundaries
Kanter (1994)	Individual excellence	All partners are strong and have something of value to contribute to the relationship
	Importance	The relationship fits major strategic objectives of the partners
	Interdependence	The partners need each other to accomplish long term goals
	Investment	The partners invest in each other to demonstrate their respective stakes in the relationship
	Information	Communication is reasonably open. Partners share information required to make the relationship work.
	Integration	The partners develop linkages and shared ways of operation
	Institutionalisation	The relationship is given a formal status, with clear responsibilities and decision making processes
	Integrity	Partners behave towards each other in honourable ways that enhance mutual trust

Table. 1 Key Formation Requirements for Public Private Partnerships (Jamali & Suliman, (2004).

2.7 Examples of a Successful Joint Ventures

Bristol Cultural Development Partnership

Bristol Cultural Development Partnership (BCDP) is a partnership of Bristol City Council (BCC), South West Arts (SWA) and the Bristol Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) and its formation was as a result of a shared the vision by all partners to see the full potential of Bristol realised. Specifically, according to Kelly and Kelly (2002), BCC could only deliver key projects by working with others; for SWA, a strong Bristol would help create a strong region; for BCCI, and for the others, there was the prospect of a great and prosperous city built on culture and good cultural facilities. Just as in the case of BusinessLiverpool, BCDP is a limited company, with a board made up from partners as well as business representatives from the public and private sector.

BCDP was one of the first independent organisations to adopt a strategic, integrated approach to culture and the management of cultural resources. To deliver results, it used creative ways of developing new projects, took risks, exploited opportunities based on the strengths of Bristol and used the skills of local organisations and the people of Bristol. Over a period of seven year, much of the work of BCDP was perceived as successful, with outcomes including; helping to attract over £100m of investment, the promotion of synergy in aspects of city development, greater levels of involvement and participation in projects, higher quality of management, increased financial support as well as a greater profile for the city.

Whilst recognising the partnership principles put forward by Drucker (1999) of a need to be clear about the partnerships mission, values and goals, Kelly and Kelly (2002) also identified a number of other reasons for this success and summarised them as follows: Firstly there was an overwhelming need to work together, with all partners accepting that each was unable to achieve what it wished to do on its own. Linked to this was that each partner had to be totally honest about motivations and recognised that all expect to gain. Thirdly, there was a clear marketing focus so that relationships were been built with stakeholders. Fourthly there was an acceptance that all partners were willing to give

credit to each other when necessary and finally solutions were been developed over the medium-to-long term rather than seeking short-term, quick wins. Finally it was accepted that for BCDP to succeed, the context was right in that there was a need and a receptive audience, combined with an elected political leadership that wished to work in partnership for the good of the city. Finally all partners worked to create the right context.

IBM-Toshiba

Whereas, the example of BCDP illustrated a public-private joint venture partnership and therefore perhaps most significant for the case study of BusinessLiverpool, there are also lessons to be learned from private-private joint ventures, as illustrated by IBM-Toshiba. It was around 1987 that executive's at IBM foresaw the likely importance to the computer industry of large high quality active-matrix liquid-crystal displays (AMLCDs). However the company's ambitions to develop in this market were hindered by a lack of high-volume LCD manufacturing experience. At around the same time, executives at Toshiba had a similar vision. Toshiba was successfully mass-producing small LCDs, but the company's ambitions were tempered by a lack of large-screen experience. On the basis of their common goal and complimentary strengths, the research units of the companies started doing joint R&D in 1987. In 1989, IBM and Toshiba created Display Technology, Inc. (DTI), and began construction of a plant in Japan. Three years later, DTI was the world's second largest producer of AMLCDs. In 1996, it produced over 2 million panels. When describing the basis for the success of this joint venture McGroddy, (1997) quotes a line from a poem by Robert Frost; "Good fences make good neighbours". In effect, IBM's and Toshiba's effective relationship was based in part on the fact that the terms of the relationship were clearly defined. McGroddy goes on to summarise that, despite early scepticism and the cultural leap, the joint venture was successful from the beginning. Key success factors included; both organisations having an absolutely common goal, a commitment to clear and open communication, a commitment from top management (with many of the key players remaining throughout the process), effective team working at an operational level and finally the application of focused management methodologies.

2.8 The COPED Theoretical Framework Model

Despite many studies being focused on joint venture partnerships, there has been little evidence of research being conducted into what makes such alliances successful. In order to address this issue, the work of Trafford and Proctor (2006) indicated the existence of five helpful characteristics; Communication, Openness, Planning, Ethos and Direction, which may be present in a successful joint venture partnership. They proposed a theoretical framework model, the 'COPED' model, for building more comprehensive and productive relationships between public sector organisations and private sector companies. These elements were presented the elements as being required to ensure some degree of success and concluded that they were often found lacking in joint venture partnerships. A major limitation of the work of Trafford and Proctor (2006) was that only they considered a single case study and that more case studies should be considered to give additional support to their findings.

2.9 Summary

It is evident from the literature that many studies have focused on business alliances such as joint venture partnerships, highlighting the fact that despite their popularity, there are many constraints and barriers to their success. There is also evidence of a range of factors that, if managed effectively, can contribute to the success of such partnership arrangements.

The work of Trafford and Proctor (2006) examined the important characteristics that go hand-in-hand with successful public-private partnerships. This work presented a descriptive model, which identified five key characteristics: good communication, openness, effective planning, ethos and direction (COPED), which they argued, may be considered influential to the success of joint ventures.

Despite the many studies into partnership working and the work of Trafford and Proctor, 2006, little empirical research has been conducted into the application of a framework of best practice to organisation at the early stages of a joint venture, despite the general consensus that many of them will encounter difficulties and ultimately fail. Which

therefore leads to the research; can *a theoretical model of joint venture best practice be successfully applied in a case study situation?*

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In order to answer the research question and fulfil the research aims, the research philosophy has adopted the principles of positivism with a predominantly deductive approach, whilst the research strategy was a multi-method approach, through the use of survey and case study techniques and using a combination of semi-structured interviews and questionnaires.

Positivism according to Saunders et al (2003) takes the stance of the natural scientist, assuming the role of an objective analyst, making detached interpretations about data that has been collected. In deductive inquiry, reasoning works from the more general to the more specific. This approach is informally called the 'top-down' approach, whereby specific expectations of a research question or hypothesis are developed on the basis of general principles (i.e. social scientists start from an existing theory, and then search for proof). The subsequent research can then be designed to test this hypothesis (Saunders et al 2003). The selected philosophy and approach for this study were considered appropriate for the research, which attempted to test the theory of a descriptive model, with an emphasis on a highly structured methodology to collect data, investigate its effectiveness and facilitate replication.

3.2 Research Strategy

The research strategy adopted a multi-method approach (Saunders et al, 2003), through the use of survey and case study techniques and using a combination of semi-structured interviews to collect the qualitative data and a questionnaire to collect the quantitative data. Multi-method research approaches and strategies can offer a number of advantages, as different methods can be used for different purposes, such as the use of semi-structured interviews to get a feel for the key issues, before embarking on the questionnaire survey. The multi-method approach also enabled *triangulation* to take place. Triangulation refers

to the use of different data collection methods within one study in order to ensure that the information provided by the data is correct (Saunders et al 2003).

A survey according to Jankowicz (2000) is when questions are directed at relatively large groups of people, in order to explore issues largely in the present and a case-study is when issues are explored both in the present and the past, as they effect relatively complete organisations. According to Yin (1994), a case study is the preferred strategy when 'how' and 'why' questions are being asked, when the investigator has little or no control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary set of events within some real-life context. Robson (2002) defines a case study as 'a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence'. This study investigated the levels of success or otherwise that were being achieved by the chosen joint venture partnership and how this situation may be measured through the application of principles recommended by a theoretical model. Thus, the case study, combined with survey techniques, provided the best approach.

In order to ensure the questionnaire focussed on the right areas, semi structured interviews were held with key subjects from across the organisation. The outputs of these interviews were then used to inform the questionnaire design. The questionnaire was piloted to ensure it was a reliable instrument and went through a number of revisions before being sent to respondents. The research was conducted in from November 2005 to February 2006.

It was felt that the methods adopted would answer the research questions, achieve its aims, address all relevant ethical issues and ensure the research was reliable and valid.

3.3 Research Procedures

3.3.1 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research can be defined as research that produces descriptive data based upon spoken or written words and observable behaviour (Sherman and Reid, 1994). Saunders et al (2003) highlighted three distinct aspects to qualitative research as;

- Based on meanings expressed through words
- Collection of results in non-standardised data requiring classification into categories
- Analysis conducted through the use of conceptualisation

The goal of qualitative-based research is to seek understanding as the participants in the study understand their world (Fowler, 1994). The search is for truths, of which there can be many. An assumption is that people can be best understood by an examination of their views as learned through their own words and trains of thought. The approach is discovery orientated, building theory from data rather than making assumptions about truth and then trying to confirm or disconfirm them.

There are many qualitative research traditions or approaches with the result that there are also different strategies to deal with the data collected (Dey, 1993; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Tesch, 1990; Robson, 1993). Tesch (1990) groups these strategies into four main categories:

- Understanding the characteristics of language
- Discovering regularities
- Comprehending the meaning of the text or action
- Reflection

The first two categories listed above are associated with analytical strategies that are more deductive in nature and require greater structure and set procedures to follow, reflecting the approach taken for this research.

Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were held with a cross-section of subjects from the three partnership organisations. The sample from each organisation included the chief executive, a senior manager and a member of the operational staff and selection was based on their knowledge and involvement in managing the day to day operation of the partnership. An introductory email was sent to all selected subjects, outlining the purpose of the research and requesting their participation (Appendix A). Confidentiality was also emphasised and there were no refusals to take part. In total nine subjects were interviewed between 14th November and 19th December 2005. All of the semi-structured interviews were on a one to one basis and were held in private meeting rooms or the office of the interviewee.

The purpose of these interviews was to gather data relating to the research question. The use of semi-structured interviews provided an opportunity for the researcher to probe areas and encourage the interviewee to elaborate on the topic being explored. This phenomenological approach was particularly important as it is concerned with understanding the meaning that respondents ascribe to various phenomena, not only to reveal and understand the 'what' and the 'how' according to Saunders et al (2003), but also to place more emphasis on exploring the 'why'.

A discussion guide was devised to facilitate the interviews and ensure consistency of answers. Questions were phrased to elicit responses to and attitudes towards each element of the COPED model as well as providing an opportunity for the subjects to comment on those aspects viewed as being most successful and least successful, other elements perceived as valuable to a successful partnership and attitudes towards the current joint venture.

These questions were focused on developing an understanding of how the joint venture partnership was progressing and what issues there were, particularly around the elements proposed by the COPED model. This approach provided a useful insight into the partnership arrangement, provided qualitative data and also gave direction and content for the survey questionnaire. A copy of the discussion guide can be seen in Appendix B. The notes from the interviews were summarised in a descriptive framework, which illustrated sample exerts as either positive or negative towards the joint venture (Appendix C). These exerts were then analysed for the presence of themes relating to attitudes towards COPED and were fed into the design of the questionnaire.

3.3.2 Quantitative Research

Quantitative data can range from simple counts such as the frequency of occurrences to more complex data such as test scores or prices (Saunders et al., 2003). To be useful these data need to be analysed and interpreted and quantitative analysis techniques assist this process. These range from creating simple table or diagrams that show the frequency of occurrence through establishing statistical relationships between variable to complex statistical modelling. Many business statistics textbooks classify quantitative data into data types using a hierarchy of measurement, often in ascending order of numerical precision (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997; Morris, 1999).

Questionnaire

Having selected self-administered questionnaires as a primary data collection method it was essential it was designed to capture the data required to answer the research question and research aims. The semi-structured interviews provided essential direction that enabled a precise questionnaire to be drafted.

The effective production of a questionnaire requires careful planning and consideration and, as argued by Bell (1999) and Oppenheim (2000) is a far harder task than is generally thought. Saunders et al (2003), highlights the importance of a well designed questionnaire as it needs to collect the precise data that is required to answer the research

question(s) and achieve objectives. Guidance to questionnaire design is offered by many authors (Dillman, 2000, Fink, 1995 and Jankowicz, 2000) and it was the approach recommended by Fisher (2004) along with the Saunders et al (2003) 'check list for questionnaire layout' that was followed for this research project.

The questionnaire was piloted as recommended by Saunders et al (2003) who say that piloting helps ensure validity and reliability and also that piloting helps to refine the questionnaire so that respondents will have no problem in answering the questions and there will be no problems in recording the data. As a result, the questionnaire went through a series of revisions and amends.

The final questionnaire was divided into three sections, and consisted of thirty four questions measuring participants' views about different aspects of the COPED model. An explanatory paragraph introduced the questionnaire and explained the purpose of the study. Questions 1 to 5 each contained 5 statements, with respondents being asked to indicate their opinions towards each statement utilising a seven point interval scale, where 7 = Strongly Agree and 1 = Strongly Disagree. These statements were phrased as both positive and negative, so as to ensure that the respondent reads each one carefully and thinks about which box to tick (Saunders et al, 2003). Question 6 asked respondents to rank in order of importance, four alternative elements seen as valuable aspects for a successful business partnership (as identified via the qualitative research) and question 7 asked respondents to indicate a range of personal details, including organisation, position, gender and age. A final footnote was included assuring respondents that all completed questionnaires would be treated with confidence. The questionnaire was pre-coded and a data file developed in Microsoft Excel for analysis (Appendix F). Questionnaires were distributed on 10th February 2006.

Procedure

In total 29 questionnaires were distributed throughout the three partner organisation. (14 Liverpool City Council staff, 9 Chamber of Commerce staff and 6 Business Link staff). Participants were selected based on their involvement with the joint vent and this included all Liverpool City Council staff within BusinessLiverpool. On this basis, a

census method was employed, as an attempt was made to collect and analyse data from every possible case or group member (Saunders et al, 2003). All questionnaires were distributed by hand and participants were asked to return them via internal mail to the researcher.

Data from the completed questionnaires was transferred into the Microsoft data file (Appendix F), which then allowed for further analysis. To ensure consistency in results, the scores for responses to negative statements (1d, 2d, 2e, 3c, 3d, 4d, 5a, 5d and 5e) were reversed so that all scores reflected attitudes towards positive statements.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

According to Saunders et al (2003), ethics in the context of research refers to the appropriateness of behaviour in relation to the rights of those who become subject to your work, or are affected by it and Wells (1994) defines ethics in terms of 'a code of behaviour appropriate to academics and the conduct of research'. It was therefore necessary to consider ethical issues throughout the period of research and remain sensitive to the impact of the work on those subjects who were approached partake in the research. This particular research required ethical considerations around data protection and anonymity, particularly as the researcher was part of the senior management team within the chosen organisation and subjects approached were staff from each of the partner organisations.

In order to address these issues, the checklist provided by Saunders et al (2003) which deals with anticipated ethical issues, was followed. This enabled the researcher to anticipate potential ethical issues and deal with them accordingly.

For the qualitative research, subjects were approached to partake in semi structured interviews and it was essential that the risk of introducing bias was overcome and ethical guidelines were followed, particularly as the researcher was an integral part of the partnership senior management team, therefore relevant preparation was necessary. An introductory email was sent to all selected subjects, outlining the purpose of the research

and requesting their participation (Appendix A). Confidentiality was also emphasised and there were no refusals to take part. The researcher prepared the opening comments and suitable questions were used that did not introduce bias. Full interview notes were collected and written-up immediately after the interview and a copy was sent to each relevant participant, inviting them to check for accuracy and correct interpretation. This process acted as a means for controlling bias and producing reliable data as recommended by Saunders et al (2003).

For the quantitative research, staff from each partner organisation were approached to take part via an email, which outlined the purpose of the research (Appendix D). Those that agreed to take part survey were issued with a hand delivered questionnaire. Questions about confidentiality, anonymity and data protection were discussed individually. A final footnote was included within each questionnaire, assuring respondents that completed questionnaires would be treated with confidence and that individual identities would not be connected with any published results.

Following these considerations it was essential that the presentation of results did not refer to individuals. As a result, the data from the completed questionnaires was transferred into the Microsoft data file (Appendix F), and named individuals were given number references to ensure anonymity.

In this way, the researcher demonstrated appropriate behaviour concerning ethics. The process was planned, consent was sought through openness and honesty and individual participant's identity was protected.

4. Findings

4.1 Introduction

The aim of the data analysis was to measure the attitudes of participants towards the five key characteristics of the theoretical COPED model proposed by Trafford and Proctor (2006), which it is argued; all contribute to the success of a joint venture. In this way, the research question and associated research aims could be addressed and answered via the resulting findings. The research strategy adopted to collect the data was a multi-method approach, through the use of survey and case study techniques and using a combination of semi-structured interviews to collect the qualitative data and a questionnaire to collect the quantitative data.

The first section presents the findings for the qualitative research, which involves an examination of the statements made by respondents to the semi-structured interviews. These statements provided a useful insight into the partnership arrangement, provided qualitative data relating to the COPED elements and also gave direction and content for the survey questionnaire

The second section presents the findings for the quantitative research, which was collated via a self-administered questionnaire. The results are presented in the form of charts in order to show the range of attitudes of participants towards the COPED elements and allow for easy interpretation and analysis.

4.2 Qualitative Research Findings

Respondents

The number of subjects interviewed totalled 9 and are presented in Table 2.

Respondents represented a cross-section of subjects from the three partnership organisations and included the chief executive, a senior manager and a member of the operational staff. Selection was based on their knowledge and involvement in managing the day to day operation of the joint venture partnership.

Organisation	Chief Executive	Senior Manager	Operational Staff
Liverpool City Council	1	1	1
Liverpool Chamber of Commerce	1	1	1
Business Link	1	1	1
Total	3	3	3

Table 2. Location of Respondents by Organisation

Analysis

As already described earlier in this paper, a discussion guide was used to facilitate the interviews and responses have been summarised in an attempt to find evidence of recurrent words, themes and concepts as suggested by the respondents (Tables 3-11).

Attitudes towards Communication

Note that prior to asking respondents to describe the communication process that currently exists within the joint venture, the researcher defined communication as *‘The process of exchanging information’*.

It was evident from the comments that there were predominantly more negative than positive comments towards communication. The recurring positive comment relating to communication being that it was perceived as being most effective at an operational level. The communication process also seems to be improving, but that progress was slow.

“Communication at operational level is good”

“Works best at operational level”

“Improving and Evolving”

Negative comments related to the poor cascading of information from the board level downwards, which was highlighted by each organisation, as well as feelings of frustration towards the lack of feedback and consultation about decisions and concerns about separate organisation agendas.

"Poor cascading of information from board level down"

"Vision not been communicated from the top"

"Key decisions taken with little consultation"

"Cumbersome/Difficult/Fragmented"

"Still thought of as separate organisations"

Attitudes towards Openness

Note that prior to asking respondents to describe their attitudes towards the levels of openness that currently exists within the joint venture, the researcher defined openness as *'Characterised by an attitude of ready accessibility (especially about actions or purpose); not secretive'*.

It was evident that there were more negative statements in relation to attitudes towards openness. The relatively few positive statements indicated evidence of a desire to be open and of some success at an operational level.

"There is a desire for openness"

"Good between operational management"

"There is a willingness to be open at operational level"

Negative comments made reference to the different cultures that exist between partners, the existence of hostility and trust, a lack of consultation, two partners appear more open than one and conflicts at board level, resulting in a lack of openness.

"Consultation not always taken, leads to conflict"

"Each organisation has its own agenda"

"2 partners are more open than 1"

"Conflict exists at executive level due to different targets"

"There is some hostility/lack of trust"

"At board level no openness"

Attitudes towards Planning

Note that prior to asking respondents to describe their attitudes towards the planning process that currently exists within the joint venture; the researcher defined planning as *'A process to determine goals and objectives and to devise the means by which they can be accomplished'*.

There was a more balanced response rate between positive and negative attitudes towards planning. Positive comments again indicated some success at an operational level, which has seen some success based on collaborative approaches.

- "Good at operational level"*
- "Team involvement"*
- "Has been a collaborative approach"*
- "Some good initial planning sessions"*

The negative comments related to planning being poor at a strategic level and being focused more on city council objectives as opposed to collective partner objectives. There was again criticism of board level activity and a lack of consultation in the planning process.

- "Is not about partner objectives"*
- "Poor at strategic level"*
- "No knowledge of planning process"*
- "Vague board interaction and focus"*
- "Not merged with partner objectives"*

Attitudes towards Ethos

Note that prior to asking respondents to describe their attitudes towards the ethos that currently exists within the joint venture, the researcher defined ethos as; *'The code of conduct of a business and the way in which it treats its staff, customers, environment and legal responsibilities'*.

There were no positive comments on ethos by LCCI, however there was a range of similar themes that linked the responses of Business Link and LCC participants. These related to a willingness to make the joint venture succeed by those who had bought into the concept as well as a strong ethos relating to the joint venture ultimately benefiting the customer. There were also positive comments relating to the new senior management structure, particularly the influence of the recently appointed chief executive.

“Good will to make it succeed”

“For those who have bought in, the ethos is strong”

“Makes good sense for the customer”

“Strong ethos driven by customer care focus”

“Strong personality of CEO is positive influence”

There was a range of negative comments relating to ethos. These included reference to the shared ethos not being clear, with each organisation having its own ethos. The influence of the city on the ethos was seen as a negative, with the overall ethos of the joint venture perceived as that of public sector rather than the private sector.

“Each organisation has its own ethos”

“Constraints of City Council are influencing ethos”

“More public sector ethos than the private sector ambitions”

“No combined cultures”

“Strong link to LCC”

“No shared ethos”

Attitudes towards Direction

Note that prior to asking respondents to describe their attitudes towards the direction of the joint venture, the researcher defined direction as; *‘Management; the act of managing something’*.

The positive comments indicated a feeling that the direction of the joint venture was improving, based predominantly on the decisive leadership of the Chief Executive and the foundation of the organisations core values. There was also further reference to some success at an operational level.

"It is improving"

"Works at operational level"

"Good leadership at CEO level"

"Decisive leadership is positive"

"Sound, strong core values and good delivery"

However, there were a number of negative comments, again referring to the dominance of city council objectives combined with some lack of clarity and confusion about the overall direction of the joint venture. The reference again to a lack of a unified direction supports the view of a fragmented approach.

"Direction perceived to be driven by LCC objectives"

"Some confusion"

"Too many vested interests"

"Lack of direction from board"

"Council dominant in partner ship"

Most successful and least successful elements

Inspection of Tables 8 and 9 reveals that respondents rated communication as the least successful element within the joint venture (7.1% in most successful category and 33.3% in least successful category), whereas ethos was ranked as the most popular element (28.6% in most successful category and 6.7% in least successful category). Direction was also rated highly (28.6% in most successful category and 20% in least successful category). Openness and planning were rated similarly, with planning achieving a slightly lower ranking in the most successful category (Planning: 14.3% vs. Openness: 21.4%).

Other important elements

Table 10 shows that respondents from each organisation were able to suggest a range of additional elements which they felt were important in a successful joint venture partnership. There were a number of similar statements and phrases that can be summarised under the following four headings.

Clear Vision

Collaboration

Commitment

Shared Focus

These four elements were used in the quantitative questionnaire, to enable participants to rank them in order of importance.

Overall attitudes to the joint venture

Table 11 presents a range of positive and negative statements that summarise respondents attitudes overall attitudes to the joint venture. There were more negative comments than positive, with many of the negative themes relating to confusion, tensions, lack of consultation and different agendas. Positive comments related to the potential of the organisation as well as some successes at delivering core activities and initiatives.

LCCI	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication at operational level is good • Improving and Evolving • CEO to CEO works well <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor cascading of information from board level down • Little or no feedback/no knowledge of strategic discussions • Often hear of things via the grapevine • Key decisions taken with little consultation • Still feeling its way due to
Business Link	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good at operational level particularly between 2 of the 3 partners • When staff are co-located there are real communication benefits <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision not been communicated from the top • 3 organisations but no shared IT/communication system • Boundary issues = different objectives • Disjointed • Communication often on 'need to know' basis • Not very transparent about roles/objectives • Little consistent feedback
LCC	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works best at operational level • Progress but slow • Greater success at communicating initiatives externally <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial vision not communicated downwards • Insubstantial • Doesn't penetrate throughout the JV except at higher level • Internal communication is a forced process • Cumbersome/Difficult/Fragmented • Dependent on good will • No integrated IT/communication systems • Still thought of as separate organisations • Does not exist across the partnership

Table 3. Responses to Question 1: 'In relation to the Joint venture, how would you describe the communication process?'

LCCI	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasingly open despite recent period of selfishness by all parties • Can work well on project basis • There is a willingness to be open at operational level <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two way process that is not always open • Consultation not always taken, leads to conflict • Not always easy to be open • Lack of genuine openness leads to alienation
Business Link	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a desire for openness • Good between operational management • Real issues are discussed openly <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superficial • Each organisation has its own agenda • Culture exists for a more open policy but processes is wrong • 2 partners are more open than 1 • Mix of personalities causes issues • Conflict exists at executive level due to different targets
LCC	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within BL open culture • Is open in communicating to the wider business community <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is some hostility/lack of trust • Issues are historic/cultural/leadership • There is competitiveness/suspicion/envy • At board level no openness • There is a general lack of openness • Exchange of information between collective partners far from open

Table 4.

Responses to Question 2: ‘In relation to the Joint venture, how would you describe the levels of openness?’

LCCI	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good at operational level • Team involvement • There has been consultation • Planning process is inclusive <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crude • Is not about partner objectives • Poor at strategic level • Not contributed to plan
Business Link	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial vision good • Some good initial planning sessions • Should improve • Some consultation <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term fire fighting • No knowledge of planning process • Should be aware but not informed • Too many plans and strategies exist at all levels • Big constraints • Focus is required
LCC	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint projects can work • Largely successful • Has been a collaborative approach • Is robust in meeting the needs of private/public sector <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level strategy dominates how the JV operates • Partners have different vehicles for planning i.e. City Council has Regeneration Business Plan • Vague board interaction and focus • Not merged with partner objectives • All have ultimate same long term aim but own agendas • Consultation at superficial level • Is about BusinessLiverpool and not about partner activities

Table 5. **Responses to Question 3: ‘In relation to the Joint Venture how would you describe the planning process?’**

LCCI	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No sense of pride about JV • Just another agency • Not clear • Each organisation has its own ethos • Still primarily a City Council ethos • Not shared across partnership
Business Link	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good will to make it succeed • Much energy and goodwill invested from operating management • Inspirational for the future • For those that have bought in ethos is strong • Makes good sense for the customer <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constraints of City Council are influencing ethos • Some are protecting own interests • Many believe in the ethos but depends on level of buy in • More public sector ethos than the private sector ambitions • No combined cultures • Silos exist
LCC	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong personality of CEO is positive influence • Strong ethos driven by customer care focus • Strong positive ethos from within BusinessLiverpool • Inherited LCC ethos is supportive • Improving as result of new senior management structure <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts made but more regular interaction required • Individuals share ethos but not whole JV • Strong link to LCC • Acts against JV achieving its own ethos • No shared ethos • Not flexible enough for private sector attitudes

Table 6.

Responses to Question 4: ‘In relation to the Joint Venture how would you describe the ethos that currently exists?’

LCCI	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is improving • There is a greater awareness of what JV should be delivering • New board gives hope for improvements <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear • Direction perceived to be driven by LCC objectives • Little feedback
Business Link	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works at operational level • Good leadership at CEO level <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some confusion • Conflict of interest at strategic board level • Not clear at strategic level • External customer is confused • Lack of direction from board • JV needs to articulate its ambition
LCC	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisive leadership is positive • Sound – strong core values and good delivery • Has many new initiatives to deliver key outputs <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board do not give direction • It is fragmented • Too many vested interests • Council dominant in partnership • Constrained by lack of clarity in commitment of core partners • Never had absolute clarity and synergy

Table 7. Responses to Question 5: ‘In relation to the Joint Venture how would you describe the direction of the organisation?’

	LCCI	Business Link	LCC	
Model Element	Score	Score	Score	Total Score
Communication		1		1 (7.1%)
Openness		3		3 (21.4%)
Planning	1	1		2 (14.3%)
Ethos	1	2	1	4 (28.6%)
Direction	1	1	2	4 (28.6%)

Table 8. Responses to Question 6: ‘In relation to the Joint venture, which elements of the model do you feel are the most successful?’

	LCCI	Business Link	LCC	
Model Element	Score	Score	Score	Total Score
Communication	2	2	1	5 (33.3%)
Openness	2		1	3 (20%)
Planning		2	1	3 (20%)
Ethos		1		1 (6.7%)
Direction		3		3 (20%)

Table 9. Responses to Question 7: ‘In relation to the Joint venture, which elements of the model do you feel are the least successful?’

LCCI	Business Link	LCC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear vision • Benefits to all need to be resolved at initial stages • Commercial constraints need to be clear • Recognition of individual brand values • Agreed purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration • Knowledge • Personalities • Management style • Right balance • Focus • All partners must work together to achieve ambitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability • Brand/identity • Success • Clear and shared VISION • ‘Buy In’ from all partners • Commitment • Clarity of purpose

Table 10. Responses to Question 8: ‘Are there any other elements that you feel should be included in the model?’

LCCI	Business Link	LCC
Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embryonic • Enormous potential Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faltering • Lack of consultation • Railroaded into decision making • Unbalanced • Public sector mentality 	Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focussed/Determined to succeed • Co-operation • Ambitious • Valiant attempt at strategic partnership • Some limited success Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not quite there yet • Confused identity • Needs to sharpen focus and direction 	Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commendable idea • Succeeding at delivering core activities • Succeeding at delivering and implementing new strategies and initiatives Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflicting • Confused (Lack of clarity) • Different agendas • Unequal partnership • Tensions and opposition • Confused • Superficial

Table 11. Responses to Question 9: ‘Give 3 statements that you feel describe the current BusinessLiverpool Joint Venture.

4.3 Quantitative Research Findings

A total of 29 questionnaires were distributed, of which 24 were completed. One questionnaire was incomplete and had to be discounted, as the respondent had not given a name. This represented a 79% return. Table 12 summarises the responses by various categories.

Response by Category	Response Rate	%
Organisation: LCC	12	52
LCCI	6	26
BL	5	22
Position: Manager	13	57
Operational Staff	10	43
Gender: Male	13	57
Female	10	43
Age: 20 -34	3	13
35 - 54	13	57
55 - 64	7	30

Table 12. Summary of Responses by Category.

Figures 3 - 7 show the percentage of participants indicating positive responses towards the five questions. The total score for each range of five questions has been averaged to give a total score by the following categories:

- Responses Total
- Responses by Organisation
- Responses by Position
- Responses by Age

Communication	49.1
Openness	46.8
Planning	37.8
Ethos	50.9
Direction	44.8

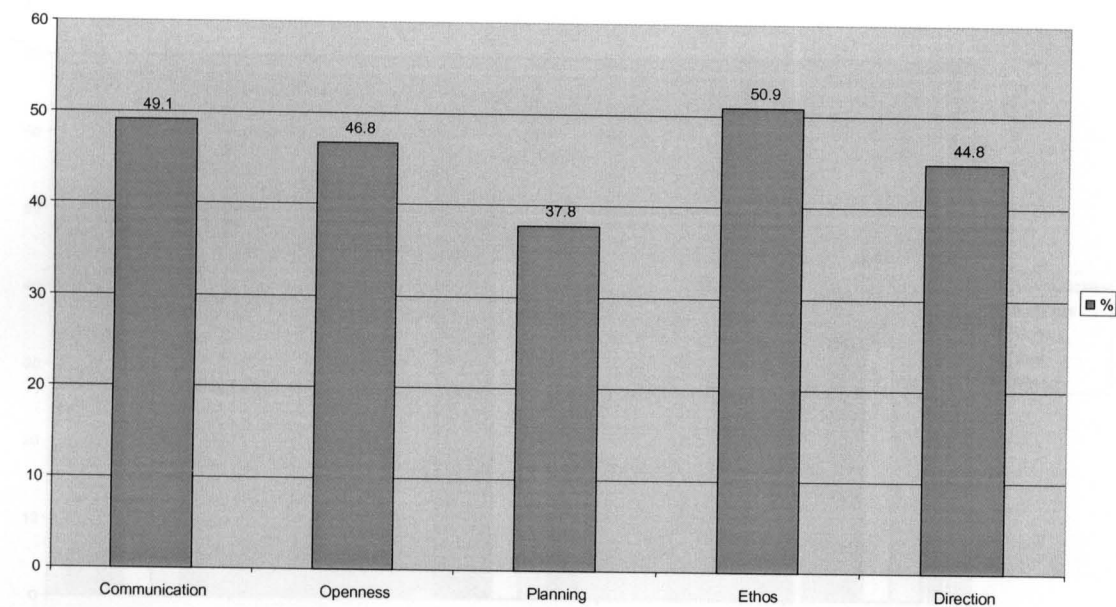


Figure 3. Overall Attitude to COPED

Figure 3, shows that the majority of participants (50.9%) indicated that they felt that Ethos was the stronger element within the joint venture and that Planning was viewed as the weaker element (37.8%). However it was also evident that all elements were viewed similarly, with only a difference of 13.8% between the most popular and least popular element. It was clear that most elements received a generally negative score, with only Ethos achieving over 50%, yet in total, 4 out of the five elements scored above 40%.

	LCC	Business Link	LCCI
Communication	47.2	54.2	39.5
Openness	47.3	49.7	35.7
Planning	53.4	44	33.3
Ethos	50.7	57.7	45.2
Direction	37.5	49.1	47.6

Figure 4. Attitude to COPED by Organisation

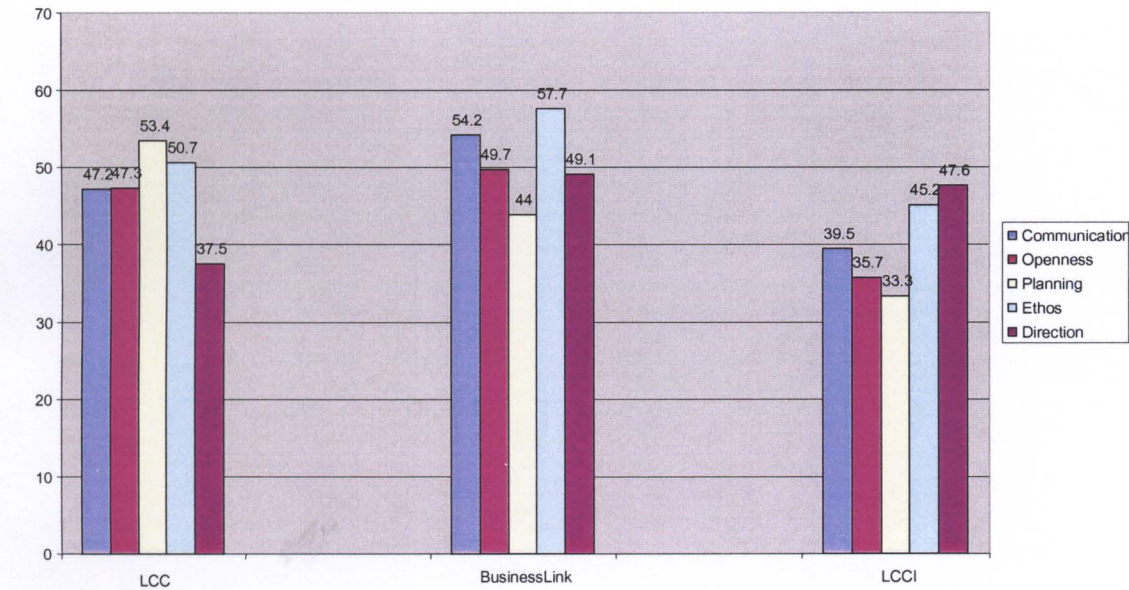


Figure 4. Attitude to COPED by Organisation

Inspection of Figure 4, reveals that Business Link participants indicated a more positive attitude towards the elements overall, scoring highest for Planning (57.7%), Communication (54.2%), Openness (49.7%) and Direction (49.1%). LCC participants rated Planning as the most effective element (53.4%), followed by Ethos (50.7%) and with Direction rated as least effective (37.5%). LCCI participants indicated less favourable attitudes towards the COPED elements overall, with Communication, Openness and Planning achieving below 40% scores. Direction was rated highest (47.6%), and Ethos rated second highest (45.2%). The majority of scores recorded for LCC and Business Link staff were above 40%, whilst the majority of scores recorded for LCCI were below 40%.

The overall relatively low scoring of elements gives some concern, with only LCC and Business Link participants rating two elements above 50%. All other elements received low scores, with an overall impression from LCCI participants that their attitude towards the various elements indicated that they were generally perceived as not successful within the joint venture.

	Manager	Operational Staff
Communication	53.8	70
Openness	45.3	48.8
Planning	49.5	47.1
Ethos	52.3	50.8
Direction	41.3	51.4

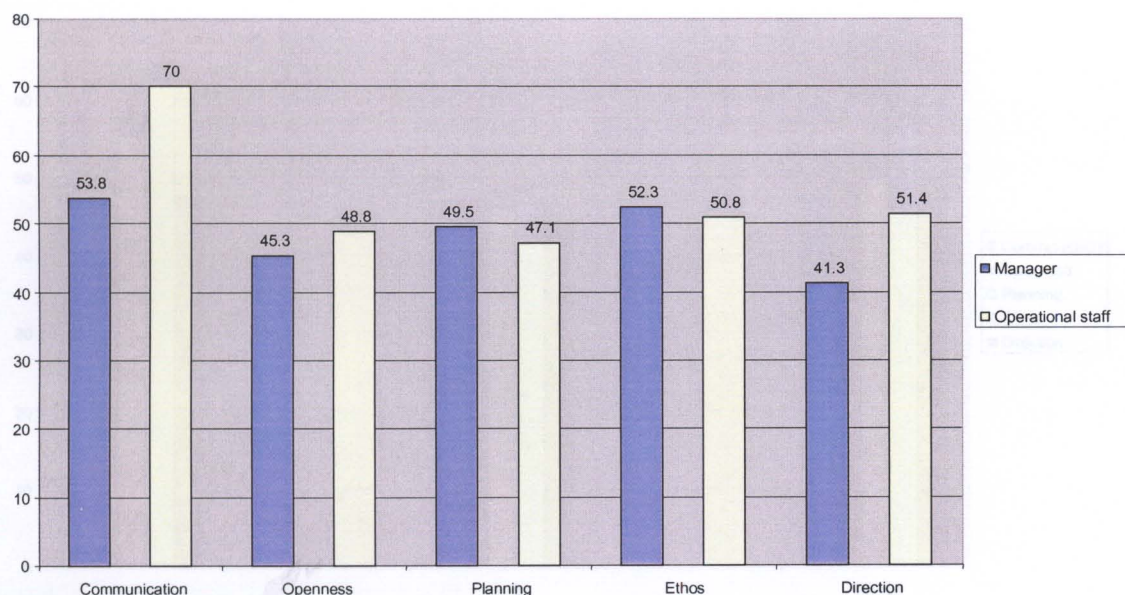


Figure 5. Attitude to COPED by Position

As shown in Figure 5, Operational Staff indicated an overall more positive attitude towards the various elements, scoring 3 out of the 5 higher than that of Managers. Operational Staff rated Communication as being the most successful element within the joint Venture with a score of 70% compared to a score of 53.8% indicated by Managers. Operational Staff also scored Direction relatively positively at 51.4%, compared to 41.3% by managers, followed by Ethos (50.8%), compared to 52.3% by Managers and then Openness (48.8%), compared to 45.3% by Managers.

The high rating of Communication by Operational Staff gives a positive impression; however again, all other scores by both Managers and Operational Staff are relatively low at around 50% or below. The lowest score achieved is given by Managers for Direction at only 41.3%, with no scores falling below 40%.

	20 - 34	35 - 54	55 - 64
Communication	60.9	47	47.7
Openness	46.6	47.4	51.8
Planning	55.2	46.1	49.7
Ethos	62.8	46.5	56.3
Direction	47.6	43.9	48.1

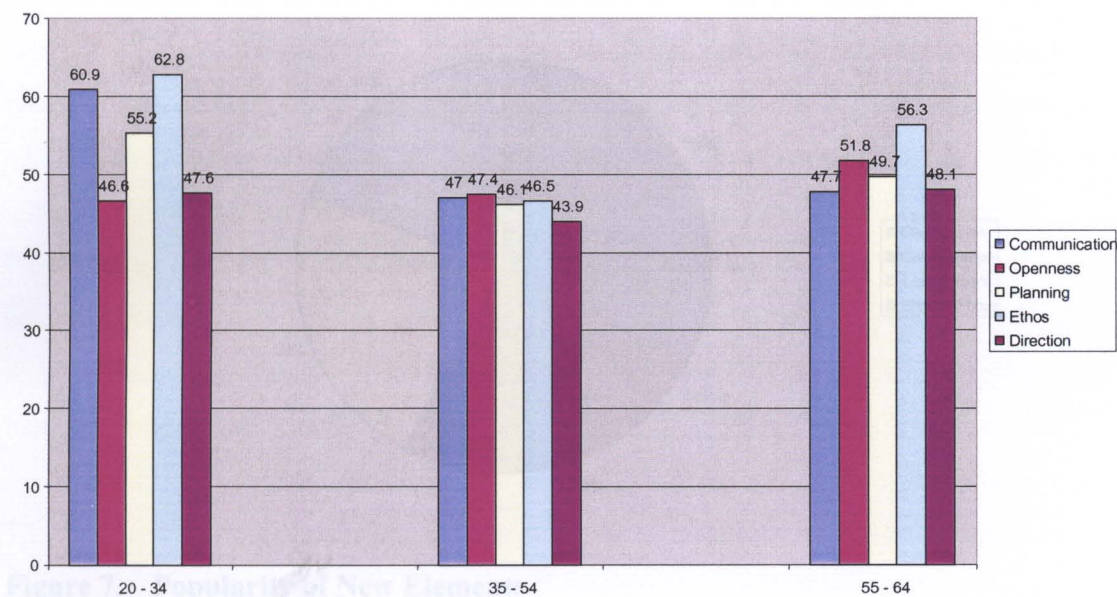


Figure 6. Attitude to COPED by Age

Figure 6, presents the results for participants’ attitudes towards the COPED elements by age. The 35-54 age group represented the largest percentage of participants (54%) and their responses were below average for each element, with Openness ranked highest at only 47.4%. This age group generally appeared to be the most frustrated by the joint venture partnership, as they disagreed with most of the survey questions with all responses below 50% and achieving the lowest overall score for Direction at 43.9%. The 20 – 34 age group presented some of the more positive ratings, with Communication (60.9%) and Ethos (62.8%) receiving high scores; however it must be noted that this age group only accounted for 13% of total respondents. The 55 – 64 age group represented 30% of participants and viewed Ethos (56.3%) and Openness (51.8%) most favourably, however ratings for the other elements were again below 50% yet with no scores falling below 40%.

Clear Vision	32
Collaboration	25
Commitment	23
Shared Focus	20

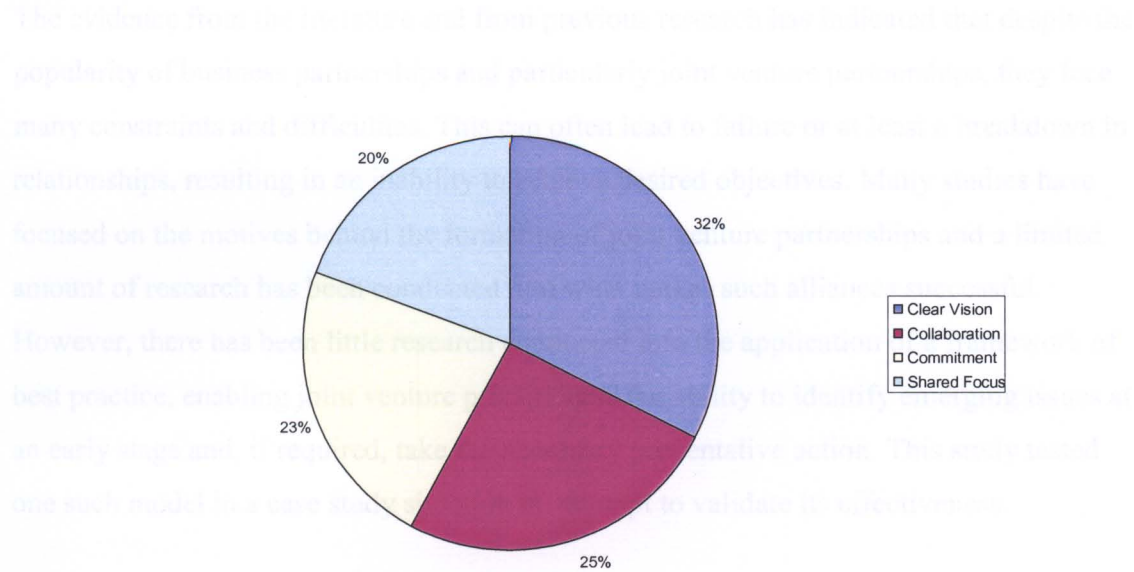


Figure 7. Popularity of New Elements

Figure 7, presents the results for the rankings of four new elements viewed as being additional, important characteristics that contribute to the success of a joint venture. Participants viewed Clear Vision as most important (32%) and Shared Focus least important (20%). Collaboration was ranked second most important (25%) and Commitment third most important (23%).

5.3 Critical Evaluation of Adopted Methodology

The research methodology employed several methodological strategies, combining survey and case study techniques. This mixed method approach was used to gain insight into different purposes in the study. For example, the research used semi-structured interviews to generate qualitative findings and get a feel for key issues before embarking on the questionnaire survey. The mixed method approach also enabled triangulation to take place, referring to the use of different data collection strategies in order to confirm the information provided by the data to increase confidence in the results.

5. Conclusions and Implications

5.1 Introduction

The evidence from the literature and from previous research has indicated that despite the popularity of business partnerships and particularly joint venture partnerships, they face many constraints and difficulties. This can often lead to failure or at least a breakdown in relationships, resulting in an inability to achieve desired objectives. Many studies have focused on the motives behind the formation of joint venture partnerships and a limited amount of research has been conducted into what makes such alliances successful. However, there has been little research conducted into the application of a framework of best practice, enabling joint venture practitioners the ability to identify emerging issues at an early stage and, if required, take the necessary preventative action. This study tested one such model in a case study situation in, attempt to validate its effectiveness.

The lack of empirical research into the application of a framework of best practice to joint venture partnerships led to the research question; "*Can a theoretical model of joint venture practice be successfully applied in a case study situation?*." As a result of the adopted methodology, the following conclusions and implications have been made about the research question and its related research objectives.

5.2 Critical Evaluation of Adopted Methodology

The research methodology employed a multi-method strategy, combining survey and case study techniques. This method enabled different methods to be used for different purposes in the study. For example, this research used semi-structured interviews to generate qualitative findings and get a feel for key issues before embarking on the questionnaire survey. The multi-method approach also enabled *triangulation* to take place, referring to the use of different data collection methods within one study in order to ensure that the information provided by the data is correct (Saunders et al 2003).

As an employee of the organisation being studied, the researcher was in the position of practitioner-researcher, which enabled ease of access and prior knowledge, therefore saving valuable time. However this position also had its limitations.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted first, with the researcher making arrangements to meet the selected participants at convenient times and locations for the face to face discussions. However, in this situation the researcher's position as practitioner-researcher (a senior manager within the organisation) was known by all who took part. This introduced a danger that the interviewees would accommodate their answers accordingly. The research interview guidelines from the literature were closely followed to avoid this happening, with the researcher refraining from expressing opinions, agreeing or challenging any responses to the questions (Fisher, 2004 and Saunders et al, 2003).

This situation was partly avoided when conducting the quantitative research, as questionnaires were issued across the three partner organisation and therefore not all respondents were familiar with the researcher. However, there were some issues concerning ease of access and much time was spent in trying to collect completed questionnaires from some participants who were based in different locations.

There were also several respondents from one partner organisation who refused to complete the questionnaires. Having initially accepted to complete the survey, they were instructed by their senior manager not to take part. Attempts were made by the researcher to resolve the matter; however email correspondence explaining the true nature of the research received no response and a reason for non participation was not given. It later became apparent, through discussions with individuals, that the senior manager was concerned that the research findings might be used to the detriment of the partner organisation. This example illustrated that despite the best efforts of the researcher to follow ethical guidelines, certain issues may not always be overcome, particularly if the research is of a sensitive nature.

5.3 Conclusions About the Research Question

Can a theoretical model of joint venture practice be successfully applied in a case study situation?

The theoretical model 'COPED' developed by Trafford and Proctor (2006) was successfully applied to the case study of BusinessLiverpool, in that, the framework enabled a comprehensive analysis of staff perceptions and attitudes towards the various characteristics viewed as important to the success of a joint venture partnership. This research also provided additional characteristics to that of the COPED model that may also be considered as important to the success of such partnerships. The research strategy employed both qualitative and quantitative methods, using each of the characteristics as a catalyst, around which relevant opinions and views were gathered and analysed. As a result of this process, the following conclusions about the stability of the joint venture were made:

Overall, despite some positive findings, the results present a picture of an organisation experiencing some significant issues, with staff perceptions and feelings toward the aspects of the COPED model being generally negative. Despite the original case for the joint venture being to enable the organisation to fully integrate operational commitments and combine the strengths of each partner into a cohesive whole, it appeared that the fundamental characteristics inherent in a successful partnership were not being fully realised. The results suggested that the BusinessLiverpool joint venture is failing in respect of many of the COPED elements and could be in danger of following the path of many typical joint ventures by becoming unstable or even, failing as a partnership. The evidence provided by the qualitative and quantitative research revealed that whilst there were some perceived successes, there were also a number of issues that needed to be addressed, as indicated below:

5.3.1 Qualitative Research Conclusions

Attitude to COPED elements

The feedback indicated that some of the fundamental constraints experienced in partnership working, as already identified by the likes of Kearns (2000), Huxham (1995) and Bennett et al (2004) were beginning to manifest themselves in the minds of the respondents. Comments relating to '*poor cascading of information*' and an emphasis on '*separate organisations*' when related to Communication highlighted constraints around effectiveness. The issue of Communication also gave rise to significant concern, due to it receiving the lowest ranking therefore the least successful element.

Conflicting cultures and issues around multiple goals were also evident when related to Openness and Direction, as evidenced by comments such as '*too many vested interests*', '*confusion*' as well as '*each partner has its own agenda*' and '*conflict exists at executive level*'. Similar issues were highlighted around Planning and Direction giving rise to an indication of '*a loss of direction*' combined with '*tensions and mixed loyalties*'.

Some solace can be taken from the number of positive comments, which were most prevalent around aspects of '*operational successes*' (Communication, Openness and Direction), '*strong leadership*' (Ethos and Direction) and '*a genuine desire to make the partnership succeed*' (Openness, Planning, and Ethos). Indeed, Ethos was perceived as the most successful element from a ranking perspective. It can be argued that these positive perceptions towards the joint venture indicate that all is not lost for the future of the partnership, as long as remedial action is taken.

Other important elements

It was evident that the characteristics of the COPED model did not represent all of the factors required for a successful joint venture, as indicated by the range of additional elements suggested by the respondents. The four most popular elements were Clear Vision, Collaboration, Commitment and Shared focus. These characteristics should therefore be viewed as integral to the success of future joint venture partnerships.

Overall attitudes towards the joint venture

Participants generally presented a negative impression of the joint venture, whilst repeating many of the themes already illustrated above. There was reference to the confusing and conflicting agendas of the different organisations as well as some of the tensions that exist between them. Some respondents perceived the partnership to be unequal, with a lack of consultation and even a feeling of unfair pressures to make or agree with the decision making process. However, it appears that the basic founding principles of the joint venture were seen as a positive, along with a determination to succeed as demonstrated by a number of successful initiatives.

5.3.2 Quantitative Research Conclusions

The initial qualitative research enabled the researcher to gather relevant data relating to the research question and at the same time, provide essential direction that enabled a precise questionnaire to be drafted for the collection of the quantitative data. The evidence gathered as a result of this research, supports some of the conclusions already established via the qualitative research, whilst contributing to a greater understanding of the issues faced by the BusinessLiverpool joint venture partnership. These findings can be summarised as follows:

Overall Attitude to COPED

The results presented, supported the findings of the qualitative analysis, in that they were not very positive towards the effectiveness of the partnership and generally presented a negative picture. Concern must be expressed at the overall low ranking achieved by all characteristics, with only Ethos achieving above 50% and in this context, and based upon the evidence of previous research, there was a clear trend towards instability in the short term and even failure over the long term.

The evidence suggests that many of the reasons for failure already referred to within this report were being experienced by BusinessLiverpool. Issues of mistrust and hostility between the partners was in evidence, which can lead to a reduction in the effectiveness

of the partnership (Bennet et al. 2004), whilst the problems highlighted by Huxham (1995, 1996a) such as loss of control, stakeholders wanting multiple unrelated goals and tension between autonomy and accountability were also in evidence.

Planning can be highlighted as a characteristic requiring urgent attention, as it received the lowest score of 37.8%. The work of Trafford and Proctor (2006) stated that a strategic planning process must be in place for a successful alliance and these are, according to Hill and Jones (2001); mission and objectives, environmental scanning, strategy formation, strategy implementation and evaluation and control. Through the application of the COPED questionnaire there was little evidence to demonstrate that these elements were being followed.

Attitude to COPED by Organisation

Whilst all characteristics received relatively low rankings by organisation, it was evident that one of the partners (LCCI) demonstrated a significantly lower perception of the characteristics of the COPED model within the joint venture. LCCI ranked three of the characteristics below 40%, demonstrating a clear message that as an important partner to the organisation there was a feeling of significant failure, particularly relating to Communication, Openness and Planning. The evidence demonstrated that the barriers relate to; a lack of understanding and mutual trust as well as issues of conflict and confusion. Ineffective communication can reduce the effectiveness of a strategic alliance (Jain, 1997), the lack of trust is a major reason for alliance failure (Peng and Shenkar, 2002) and a poorly managed planning strategy can cause costly distractions (Gomes-Casseres, 2000). Remedial action is therefore required to address these issues, not only for the benefit of the partnership, but particularly to ensure that LCCI remain aligned to the joint venture.

Attitude to COPED by Position

The relatively low ratings for the characteristics of COPED was again reflected in the results when broken down by position. The general trend was below 50%, with the exception of Communication and Ethos, which both managers and operational staff

viewed positively. Despite the other characteristics receiving below average scores, none were below 40% and there were no discernable differences between the views of managers or staff. It can be interpreted that the general trend was towards the mid point or neutral point of the scale, indicating that whilst remedial action should be taken, the scope of the task should be achievable.

Attitude to COPED by Age

Responses were broken down by age, in order to identify trends or differences of opinions; however, whilst the differences between response ranges were not high, the following conclusions can be drawn:

The 35-54 age group presented the most negative attitudes towards the COPED characteristics. This age group also represented the largest proportion of respondents (54%) and should therefore be judged as significantly influential in the success or otherwise of the partnership. The older age group, 55-64, appeared the more satisfied with the joint venture, particularly the characteristics of Ethos and Openness, yet it was the younger 20-34 age group that gave the most positive results, particularly for communication, Planning and Ethos.

However, with the 20-34 age group only making up 13% of respondents and the 34-54 age group making up 54% of total respondents, it was evident that the majority of the organisation expressed general dissatisfaction with the joint venture partnership. Therefore, whilst remedial action should naturally be focussed across the whole age range, particular emphasis could be placed on these individuals. Again, on a positive note, and as reflected by the results by position, none of the results were below 40%, giving rise to some hope that remedial action if taken correctly, could turn negative or neutral attitudes to more positive attitudes towards the joint venture partnership.

Popularity of New Elements

It was evident from the literature, that there were a number of other characters perceived as important to the success of a joint venture partnership, other than those proposed by Trafford and Proctor (2006) and one of the research aims was to identify other characteristics that may contribute to a successful joint venture. The qualitative research identified four further important characteristics, which each achieved a ranking via the questionnaire results. Of the four, Clear Vision was rated as most important, with the following three of Collaboration, Commitment and Shared Focus each receiving similar ratings. It can therefore be concluded that all four new characteristics can be viewed as important factors in the success of a joint venture partnership and should therefore be put forward as additional characteristics to those already proposed by the COPED model.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

The theoretical COPED model has been applied to only the one case study. There could therefore be scope for wider application of this method of analysis to demonstrate its practical usefulness in measuring joint venture success and attitudes of stakeholders towards joint ventures.

The relatively small size of the sample for the quantitative research may also be considered a limitation as was the fact that the researcher was a senior manager of the organisation being investigated, therefore answers may have been biased. The various settings in which the qualitative interviews were conducted and the time constraints under which some of them were conducted may also be considered to have been an influence upon the type and depth of inquiry undertaken by the researcher.

5.5 Summary

The research question has been answered, in that a theoretical model of best practice (the COPED model) was successfully applied to a joint venture case study (BusinessLiverpool). The model principles provided a framework of characteristics on which to base both the qualitative and quantitative research, enabling the researcher to explore opinions and attitudes of staff and thus effectively evaluate the level of success of the partnership. Other characteristics have also been identified that can be included as contributing to the success of a joint venture.

All joint venture partnerships are not successful, and the research has revealed that to make them successful, requires careful planning and hard work by all involved. There are many challenges in managing partnerships, particularly in the public sector and the adoption of the Trafford and Proctor COPED theoretical model, whilst improving the chances of a successful joint venture, cannot of their own accord guarantee success, as there are many other factors involved.

Given the range of people and organisations involved, the basic problem according to Kelly and Kelly (2002) is the management of multiple stakeholders, which requires new thinking. Partnership should not be viewed as simple organisations, but as networks, that require correct management in order to make better partnerships in the future. It is therefore recommended that to address the final research aims and avoid the risks associated with joint venture partnerships the following recommendations be made.

6. Recommendations

6.1 BusinessLiverpool Joint Venture Implementation Plan

There is a requirement to remedy the issues within the BusinessLiverpool joint venture partnership, whilst exploiting the potential opportunities, both of which have been highlighted through the research and successful application of the theoretical COPED model. Firstly, a re-evaluation of the initial principles and drivers for the joint venture is required. If they still exist and there is a will from all partners to succeed, then the following action are recommended:

Communication requirements

- Establish clear communication and information sharing to ensure more informed decisions and implementation of the vision (Kelly and Kelly, 2002)
- Ensure open and quality communications among the partners of the joint venture (USDA fact sheet on joint venturing, 2006)
- Establish good communication channels and sharing of information between partners (Patel, 2005)
- Share important information such as technical data, objectives, goals any problems or conflicts, or changing situations between partners (Arias, 1995)

Communication Actions

- Establish a communication strategy that strengthens the co-operative relationship
- Make arrangements to effectively review and communicate developments within the partnership, through the establishment of a communication group
- Ensure continuous communication via internal meetings, partner away days, conferences, seminars.
- Develop a media strategy for the partnership that informs internally through use of intranet, news bulletins, press clippings celebrating successes across the partnership
- Put in place arrangements for reviewing progress on communications

- Produce an annual report and ensure circulation to all stakeholders. This can be used as a focal point for annual partner conference

Openness Requirements

- Establish clear boundaries, measurable outputs and transparency (Jamali & Suliman (2004)
- Be honest about motivations for the partnership (Kelly & Kelly, 2002)
- Remove barriers that lead to 'turf mentality' 'conflicting cultures' and 'mixed loyalties' (Kearns, 2000)
- Provide equal opportunities to gain and develop trust between partners, whilst reinforcing integrity, discretion and consistency of behaviour. (Shapiro et al, 1992; Johnson & Scholes, 2002)

Openness Actions

- Share the business plan with stakeholders, using it to re-state the partnership objectives and achieve 'buy in' from staff (linked to communication actions)
- Use a range of methods to involve partner staff in achieving aims and objectives through people workshops and formal meetings
- Encourage team working to resolve issues and tackle projects via specific focus groups that are empowered to take risks, make decisions and recommend resolving action

Planning Requirements

- Establish a common vision and mission as well as identify and understand the key issues associated with the partnership (Wilson et al, 1995)
- Develop clear, common objectives and a definition of success (Anslinger & Jenk, 2004)
- Implement a rational planning process, subjugated by top management (Hill & Jones, 2001)
- Clarify the aims and objectives of the partnership, what it is trying to achieve and inform all stakeholders (Patel, 2005)

Planning Actions

- Re-visit the strategic planning process, to ensure board and partner agreement with mission and objectives, environmental scanning, strategy formation, strategy implementation and evaluation and control.
- Produce a clear, structured plan owned by all the partners, which links to business plans, aims and objectives
- Produce a document which is used to monitor progress by the partnership, and on which action is taken to correct slippage
- Develop a strategic business plan which is integrated into a clear performance management system
- Ensure correct consultation and participation in above by appropriate staff

Ethos Requirements

- Promote widespread learning and knowledge, not just about the partnership, but for partners and other stakeholders (Kelly and Kelly, 2002)
- Generate a perception of the organisations 'image' and 'identity' to its employees and customers (Kennedy, 1997 and Davies et al, 2001)
- Build the character and spirit of the company (Buono, 1991)

Ethos Actions

- Create a vision for the organisation through the business plan.
- Establish a code of conduct, that agrees a set of standards for the partnership (see LCC vision, aims and values statement and adapt)
- Improve internal communications and encourage staff learning and skills via partner away days secondments
- Develop and promote a shared ethos across the organisation by agreeing messages and actions from board level down.

Direction requirements

- Ensure senior management support, to build relationships and enable cultural and political hurdles to be overcome (Johnson and Scholes, 2002)

- Strong leadership is needed, to bring together the different cultures and structures in order to achieve a mutual aim (Kearns, 2000)
- Articulate the vision for the partnership, to motivate others to buy into that vision (Hill & Jones, 2001)

Direction Actions

- Clearly define goals and objectives to be accomplished by the partnership; this will prevent any misunderstandings amongst partners
- Clearly define the role and responsibilities of each partner in the joint venture
- Ensure open and quality communications among the partners of the joint venture
- Ensure that the strengths of each partner are fully utilised
- Apply highly focused management methodologies
- Demonstrate a commitment from the top (Board and CEO's) talk up the positives of the partnership at away days, conferences, AGM.

6.2 Check-List for Future Joint Venture Partnerships

Partnership Characteristic	Requirement	Yes	No
Communication	Is there a plan in place that communicates the strategy in order to strengthen the cooperative relationships between partnership staff at all levels, as well as to ensuring the communication of corporate values		
Openness	Is there a strategy to build relationships and trust throughout the partnership, through the encouragement of staff empowerment, innovation and creative working		
Planning	Is there a rational, strategic, planning process that has been developed by the partnership top management, which can be shared with staff and ultimately delivered by all		
Ethos	Is there a code of conduct that sets out how the partnership manages its staff, customer, environment and legal responsibilities		
Direction	Is there a strategy to strengthen and develop leadership qualities, that will motivate others to buy in to the partnership		
Clear Vision	Has a vision been created, that defines the organisations values, practices and behaviours and which can be appreciated and understood by employees and customers		
Collaboration	Can the partnership demonstrate positive outcomes that would not have been achievable without joint workings		
Commitment	Is there an overwhelming desire for partners to work together		
Shared Focus	Do all the partners and employees understand and agree with the rationale for the partnership		

Table 13. Check-list for a Successful Joint Venture Partnership

As a result of this research, several other elements were identified as being essential requirements to ensure some degree of success in joint venture partnerships. These characteristics of Clear Vision, Collaboration, Commitment and Shared Focus have been added to the theoretical COPED proposed by Trafford and Proctor (2006) and included in a check-list to aid future joint venture partnerships (Table 13). The elements contained

within this check-list, whilst not guaranteeing success of their own accord, since many other factors are at play, may be used as a useful guide for joint venture practitioners or any organisation considering future joint venture partnership working. In this way, the many constraints highlighted by this research, may be avoided.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Q&A Participation Request Email

From: Whitehead, Paul
Date:
To:
Subject: MBA Dissertation Q & A Session

Dear Colleague

I am currently collecting data for my research towards a master's degree in Business Administration from Chester Business College and I would value your participation. If you agree we would discuss the BusinessLiverpool Joint Venture Partnership.

The purpose of this research is to investigate the factors that contribute towards successful relationships between public sector organisations and private sector companies. The study will consider some characteristics proposed by a strategic framework model, which was developed as a result of examining issues surrounding the formation of joint ventures. Five key characteristics were proposed; Communication, Planning, Ethos and Direction, which may be considered influential in terms of the behaviour and structural aspects when forming and maintaining such a partnership.

I have attached a discussion guide which I propose to follow in the Q & A session. Please feel free to look at the questions and prepare any answers beforehand.

If you are happy to take part, could you please suggest a convenient time and location to meet? I would suggest we allocate 45 minutes for the meeting.

I will be taking written notes during the interview session, which, once written up, will be sent to you to check for accuracy and correct interpretation of the points discussed. Your name will not appear on any final reports associated with this research.

Kind Regards

Paul Whitehead
Head of Marketing
BusinessLiverpool

Appendix B: Discussion Guide

Businessliverpool Joint Venture - Discussion Guide

Name:
Organisation:
Position:
Date:

This guide will form the basis of the initial discussions. It is not exhaustive and certain topic areas may be introduced / expanded if relevant to the flow. The results/findings will be used as the basis for a quantitative questionnaire which will be distributed to a broader sample of BusinessLiverpool employees.

- 1. Communication can be described as the process of exchanging information and effective communication is often viewed as a key ingredient to an organisations success.

Q. In relation to the Joint venture, how would you describe the communication process?

- 2. Openness within an organisation can be characterised as an attitude of ready accessibility, especially about actions or purposes i.e. not secretive. This can relate to key decisions, consultation about changes or even just explaining why certain key decisions have been made.

Q. In relation to the Joint Venture how would you describe the levels of openness?

3. Organisational planning is a process taken to determine goals and objectives, leading to a plan which outlines a means by which they can be accomplished. Any published business plan should then provide a clear and easy to read summary of the organisations priorities and objectives.

Q. In relation to the Joint Venture how would you describe the planning process?

4. The ethos of an organisation relates to its code of conduct and the way in which it treats its staff, customers, environment and legal responsibilities. Organisations with a strong/clear ethos can often instil staff with a strong sense of identity and pride. Staff motivation, satisfaction and personal development are also high priorities.

Q. In relation to the Joint Venture, how would you describe the ethos that currently exists?

5. Organisational direction relates to its leadership and management. Effective direction removes uncertainty and ambiguity, and shapes and implements a vision for future development.

Q. In relation to the Joint Venture how would you describe the direction of the organisation?

6. Which elements of the model do you feel are the most successful?

7. Which elements of the model do you feel are the least successful?

8. Are there any other elements that you feel should be included in the model?

9. Give 3 statements that you feel describe the current BusinessLiverpool Joint Venture:

1.

2.

3.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix C: Descriptive framework, Summarising Q&A
Interview Notes

Question 1: In relation to the Joint venture, how would you describe the communication process?

LCCI	Business Link	BusinessLiverpool
Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication at operational level is good Improving and Evolving CEO to CEO works well 	Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good at operational level particularly between 2 of the 3 partners When staff are co-located there are real communication benefits New communications group has addressed many issues 	Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works best at operational level Progress but slow Greater success at communicating initiatives externally
Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor cascading of information from board level down Little or no feedback/no knowledge of strategic discussions Often hear of things via the grapevine Key decisions taken with little consultation Still feeling its way due to different chief executives, each with own style 	Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vision not been communicated from the top 3 organisations but no shared IT/communication system Boundary issues = different objectives Disjointed Communication often on 'need to know' basis Not very transparent about roles/objectives Little consistent feedback 	Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial vision not communicated downwards Insubstantial Doesn't penetrate throughout the JV except at higher level Internal communication is a forced process Cumbersome/Difficult/Fragmented Dependent on good will No integrated IT/communication systems Still thought of as separate organisations Does not exist across the partnership

Question 2: In relation to the Joint venture, how would you describe the levels of openness?

LCCI	Business Link	BusinessLiverpool
Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasingly open despite recent period of selfishness by all parties Can work well on project basis There is a willingness to be open at operational level 	Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a desire for openness Good between operational management Real issues are discussed openly 	Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within BL open culture Is open in communicating to the wider business community
Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 way process that is not always open Consultation not always taken, leads to conflict Not always easy to be open Lack of genuine openness leads to alienation 	Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Superficial Each organisation has its own agenda Culture exists for a more open policy but processes is wrong 2 partners are more open than 1 Mix of personalities causes issues Conflict exists at executive level due to different targets 	Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is some hostility/lack of trust Issues are historic/cultural/leadership There is competitiveness/suspicion/envy At board level no openness There is a general lack of openness Exchange of information between collective partners far from open

Question 3: In relation to the Joint Venture how would you describe the planning process?

LCCI	Business Link	BusinessLiverpool
Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good at operational level• Team involvement• There has been consultation• Planning process is inclusive	Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initial vision good• Some good initial planning sessions• Should improve• Some consultation	Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joint projects can work• Largely successful• Has been a collaborative approach• Is robust in meeting the needs of private/public sector
Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Crude• Is not about partner objectives• Poor at strategic level• Not contributed to plan	Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short term fire fighting• No knowledge of planning process• Should be aware but not informed• Too many plans and strategies exist at all levels• Big constraints• Focus is required	Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High level strategy dominates how the JV operates• Partners have different vehicles for planning i.e. City Council has Regeneration Business Plan• Vague board interaction and focus• Not merged with partner objectives• All have ultimate same long term aim but own agendas• Consultation at superficial level• Is about BusinessLiverpool and not about partner activities

Question 4: In relation to the Joint Venture how would you describe the ethos that currently exists?

LCCI	Business Link	BusinessLiverpool
Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none">• None	Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good will to make it succeed• Much energy and goodwill invested from operating management• Inspirational for the future• For those that have bought in ethos is strong• Makes good sense for the customer	Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong personality of CEO is positive influence• Strong ethos driven by customer care focus• Strong positive ethos from within BusinessLiverpool• Inherited LCC ethos is supportive• Improving as result of new senior management structure
Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No sense of pride about JV• Just another agency• Not clear• Each org has its own ethos• Still primarily a City Council ethos• Not shared across partnership	Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Constraints of City Council are influencing ethos• Some are protecting own interests• Many believe in the ethos but depends on level of buy in• More public sector ethos than the private sector ambitions• No combined cultures• Silos exist	Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attempts made but more regular interaction required• Individuals share ethos but not whole JV• Strong link to LCC• Acts against JV achieving its own ethos• No shared ethos• Not flexible enough for private sector attitudes• Straining slightly

Question 5: In relation to the Joint Venture how would you describe the direction of the organisation?

LCCI	Business Link	BusinessLiverpool
Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is improving There is a greater awareness of what JV should be delivering New board gives hope for improvements 	Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works at operational level Good leadership at CEO level 	Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decisive leadership is positive Sound – strong core values and good delivery Has many new initiatives to deliver key outputs
Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unclear Direction perceived to be driven by LCC objectives Little feedback 	Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some confusion Conflict of interest at strategic board level Not clear at strategic level External customer is confused Lack of direction from board JV needs to articulate its ambition 	Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board do not give direction It is fragmented Too many vested interests Council dominant in partnership Constrained by lack of clarity in commitment of core partners Never had absolute clarity and synergy

Question 6: Which elements of the model do you feel are the most successful?

	LCCI	Business Link	BusinessLiverpool		
Model Element	Score	Score	Score	Total	%
Communication		1		1	7
Openness		3		3	21
Planning	1	1		2	14
Ethos	1	2	1	4	29
Direction	1	1	2	4	29

Question 7: Which elements of the model do you feel are the least successful?

	LCCI	Business Link	BusinessLiverpool		
Model Element	Score	Score	Score	Total	%
Communication	2	2	1	5	36
Openness	1		1	2	14
Planning		2	1	3	21
Ethos		1		1	8
Direction		3		3	21

Question 8: Are there any other elements that you feel should be included in the model?

LCCI	Business Link	BusinessLiverpool
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear vision Benefits to all need to be resolved at initial stages Commercial constraints need to be clear Recognition of individual brand values Agreed purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration Knowledge Personalities Management style Right balance Focus All partners must work together to achieve ambitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountability Brand/identity Success Clear and shared VISION 'Buy In' from all partners Commitment Clarity of purpose

Question 9: Give 3 statements that you feel describe the current BusinessLiverpool Joint Venture:

LCCI	Business Link	BusinessLiverpool
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Embryonic• Faltering• Enormous potential• Lack of consultation• Railroaded into decision making• Unbalanced• Public sector mentality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focussed/Determined to succeed• Co-operation• Ambitious• Not quite there yet• Confused identity• Valiant attempt at strategic partnership• Needs to sharpen focus and direction• Some limited success	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commendable idea• Confused (Lack of clarity)• Conflicting• Different agendas• Unequal partnership• Tensions and opposition• Confused• Succeeding at delivering core activities• Succeeding at delivering and implementing new strategies and initiatives• Superficial

Appendix D: Questionnaire Participation Request Email

From: Whitehead, Paul
Date:
To:
Subject: BusinessLiverpool Joint Venture Questionnaire

Dear Colleague

I am currently collecting data for my research towards a master's degree in Business Administration from Chester Business College and I would value your contribution by completing a questionnaire.

The purpose of this research is to investigate the factors that contribute towards successful relationships between public sector organisations and private sector companies. The study will consider some characteristics proposed by a strategic framework model, which was developed as a result of examining issues surrounding the formation of joint ventures. Five key characteristics were proposed; Communication, Planning, Ethos and Direction, which may be considered influential in terms of the behaviour and structural aspects when forming and maintaining such a partnership.

I will be handing out the questionnaires this week and if you are happy to take part please complete it and return to myself (return details included in the questionnaire).

Please note that putting your name to the questionnaire is optional and all responses will be treated in confidence. Your name will not appear on any final reports associated with this research.

Kind Regards

Paul Whitehead
Head of Marketing
BusinessLiverpool

Appendix E: Questionnaire

The BusinessLiverpool Joint Venture Survey Questionnaire

Dear Colleague

I am currently collecting data for my research towards a master's degree in Business Administration and I would value your participation by answering the following questionnaire.

The purpose of this research is to investigate the factors that contribute towards successful relationships between public sector organisations and private sector companies, using BusinessLiverpool as an example. The study is considering characteristics from a strategic framework model that proposes five elements important to such partnerships: Communication, Openness, Planning, Ethos and Direction. Your responses will help to gauge their influence on the developing Joint Venture (i.e. the formal partnership between Business Link, Liverpool Chamber of Commerce and Liverpool City Council)

Please indicate your view of the following statements that relate to the BusinessLiverpool Joint venture.

(Circle the number that best reflects your attitude towards each statement on a scale of 1 to 7 where 7 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Undecided (U) and 1 = Strongly Disagree

1. **To what extent do you agree that the following statements describe the communication process within the Joint Venture?**

		Strongly Agree			U			Strongly Disagree
a	I am told on a regular basis how the Joint Venture is doing	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
b	At an operational level, communication between partner organisations is good	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
c	Effective engagement with staff is achieved through a range of communication methods	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
d	I mostly hear news about the Joint Venture via rumours and office gossip	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
e	At a strategic level, communication between partner organisations is good	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

2. To what extent do you agree that the following statements describe the openness within the Joint Venture?

		Strongly Agree			U			Strongly Disagree		
a	At an operational level, the exchange of information between partners is very open	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
b	At a strategic level, the exchange of information between partners is very open	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
c	The Joint Venture organisational structure is clearly defined	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
d	I am not consulted about changes that affect me	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
e	It is difficult to be truly open when each organisation has its own agenda	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		

3. To what extent do you agree that the following statements describe the planning process within the Joint Venture?

		Strongly Agree			U			Strongly Disagree		
a	I have access to the Joint Venture business plan	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
b	The Joint Venture planning process has been a shared experience	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
c	I do not fully understand the purpose of the Joint Venture	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
d	Staff should be more involved in defining the direction of the Joint Venture	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
e	The Joint Venture planning process fully reflects the objectives of all partners	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		

4. To what extent do you agree that the following statements describe the ethos of the Joint Venture?

		Strongly Agree			U			Strongly Disagree		
a	There is a strong ethos within the Joint Venture	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
b	Each partner organisation has its own distinct ethos	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
c	I have a strong sense of identity and pride in the Joint Venture	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
d	There is no shared ethos that unites the partner organisations	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
e	Staff motivation and development are high priorities within the Joint Venture	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		

5. To what extent do you agree that the following statements describe the direction of the Joint Venture?

		Strongly Agree			U			Strongly Disagree		
a	The Joint Venture is hindered by a lack of commitment from partners	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
b	The new Joint Venture board will help clarify future direction	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
c	I need to know more about the direction of the Joint Venture	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
d	There are conflicting interests between partner organisations	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
e	There needs to be greater clarity about the overall vision of the Joint Venture	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		

6. Previous research has indicated that the following 4 elements should also be included in a successful business partnership. Please rank them from 1 to 4 according to importance (1 = most important):

Clear Vision	<input type="checkbox"/>	a	Collaboration	<input type="checkbox"/>	b
Commitment	<input type="checkbox"/>	c	Shared Focus	<input type="checkbox"/>	d

Finally please give some information about yourself?

- | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|---|
| 7. Organisation: | Liverpool CC | <input type="checkbox"/> | a |
| | Business Link | <input type="checkbox"/> | b |
| | Liverpool Chamber | <input type="checkbox"/> | c |
| 8. Position: | Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> | a |
| | Operational staff | <input type="checkbox"/> | b |
| 9. Gender: | Male | <input type="checkbox"/> | a |
| | Female | <input type="checkbox"/> | b |
| 10. Age: | 16 - 19 | <input type="checkbox"/> | a |
| | 20 - 34 | <input type="checkbox"/> | b |
| | 35 - 54 | <input type="checkbox"/> | c |
| | 55 - 64 | <input type="checkbox"/> | d |
| | 65+ | <input type="checkbox"/> | e |

Name: (Optional)

Date:

Please note that your responses will be treated with confidence and at all times data will be presented in such a way that your identity cannot be connected with specific published data.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Please return to: Paul Whitehead
BusinessLiverpool
No1 Old Hall Street
Tel: 0151 233 5470

Appendix F: Questionnaire Data File

Participants	Q1					Q2					Q3					Q4					Q5					Q6					Q7			Q8		Q9		Q10					
	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	a	b	a	b	a	b	c	d	e						
A	2	5	3	1	5	6	5	5	7	1	1	2	6	1	5	5	5	5	7	5	1	6	5	1	4	1	7	7	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1					
B	2	4	5	2	4	3	5	4	2	7	4	4	6	3	3	2	6	5	1	4	2	5	7	1	2	3	2	1	1	2	3	2	1	4	1			1					
C	5	4	5	6	4	5	5	6	5	5	5	5	6	5	4	2	5	6	4	5	2	4	3	3	4	1	2	1				1	1				1						
D	2	5	2	4	4	4	4	5	6	2	2	2	6	4	3	6	6	6	4	5	1	4	4	3	4	1	2	4	1	2	4	2	3	1	1				1				
E	2	1	3	3	4	1	4	2	3	1	4	4	7	1	4	1	6	5	1	3	2	4	7	2	2	4	1	2	4	1	2	3	1	1					1				
F	3	5	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	1	4	3	2	5	4	2	6	2	2	2	2	5	5	3	2	4	3	2	1	1			1	1									
G	7	3	5	7	7	2	2	3	1	2	7	5	7	3	3	5	5	6	5	4	1	5	2	2	6	3	4	2	1	1			1	1			1						
H	4	3	5	5	3	5	3	4	5	1	6	5	6	3	2	4	6	5	5	2	3	3	5	5	4	3	2	1	1	4	1	3	2	1			1						
I	4	3	5	4	3	4	3	4	3	5	2	5	7	5	4	3	5	5	4	3	2	4	4	3	2	4	1	1	1	4	1	3	2	1			1						
J	2	1	2	1	2	1	1	2	7	1	4	2	5	1	2	1	7	2	1	1	1	5	6	1	1	4	4	1	1	1	4	1	2	3	1	1			1				
K	2	2	2	5	7	2	7	1	5	1	5	2	7	1	5	2	3	5	5	1	2	7	1	2	7	1	1	5	6	1	1	4	2	3	1	1			1				
L	3	4	2	5	3	4	4	5	3	5	2	3	6	5	3	3	5	5	4	3	3	5	5	4	3	4	5	1	4	2	3	1	1			1		1					
M	3	2	2	3	4	4	4	2	6	2	3	5	6	1	4	3	3	5	5	1	2	4	6	7	4	1	3	4	2	1	1	4	2	3	1			1		1			
N	1	6	4	2	2	6	2	1	4	2	1	6	2	2	2	1	6	5	5	1	2	2	4	6	1	1	4	6	1	1	4	3	2	1			1		1				
O	6	6	5	6	3	6	2	1	5	2	3	6	2	2	2	3	5	2	5	3	5	6	1	1	4	3	2	1	1	1	4	3	2	1			1		1				
P	4	6	5	3	6	6	4	2	2	5	2	2	5	4	4	6	3	4	4	5	3	7	2	1	1	4	2	3	1	1			1			1		1					
Q	1	5	3	3	4	5	4	2	6	2	1	3	5	4	2	2	6	2	1	2	2	4	6	3	1	4	5	3	1	1	4	2	3	1			1		1				
R	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	2	3	1			1		1				
S	3	3	3	2	4	5	4	2	3	1	4	4	5	2	3	3	4	4	2	3	3	4	7	1	1	4	2	1	1	1	1	1			1			1		1			
T	4	6	4	3	5	6	4	1	4	2	2	2	2	6	1	6	3	3	3	1	2	7	7	1	1	3	4	2	1	1	3	1			1			1		1			
U	3	4	2	3	4	4	4	4	2	3	3	3	3	2	4	3	5	3	3	4	5	4	7	5	2	1	2	4	3	1	1			1			1		1				
V	1	1	1	6	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			1			1		1				
W	1	5	2	2	5	4	5	2	2	3	1	5	2	3	4	7	3	6	2	4	4	6	3	2	4	4	3	2	1	1	2	3	4			1			1				
Mode	2	5	5	3	4	4	4	2	5	1	1	2	6	1	4	1	6	5	1	3	1	4	7	1	1	4	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			
Median	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	2	4	2	3	6	2	3	3	6	4	2	3	2	4	6	2	1	4	6	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Average	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	2	3	5	3	4	3	6	4	3	3	2	4	6	2	2	4	6	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	